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FRANCIS XAVIER

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Ex lris B.X auerij ad Ignatium ex India scriptis
GRATIA ET CARITAS X^i D. N. Mi pater in X^o viscerib' vnice
Te ego pater animæ meæ, sumeq; mihi venerande positis hum ge
nibus (sic n. hanc tibi epta scribo) supplicitèr oro, vt mihi a
Deo impetres, vt dum viuam sanctissimæ voluntatis suæ mihi det
et plane agnoscendæ, et omnino exequendæ facultatem. Vale
Tuus. minimus filius. longissimeq; exulans. FRANC^S XAVERIVS 59

FRANCIS XAVIER WRITING TO IGNATIUS LOYOLA
FROM INDIA

FRANCIS XAVIER

KNIGHT ERRANT OF THE CROSS

1506-1552

By

EDITH ANNE ROBERTSON

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TO
AILIE, JEN, AND
LESLEY ANNE

ARMINGTON
YRARBI
NEW YORK

First published February 1930

Made and Printed in Great Britain
by Turnbull & Spears, Edinburgh

PREFACE

Although this little book is by no means just a curtailed edition of my former larger *Life* of St Francis Xavier—now out of print—but an entirely new volume, I have, where I found I could say the thing in no other way, repeated certain passages from the earlier study, and I hope for this I may be forgiven by any stray reader who may find these passages unpleasantly familiar.

I have most heartily to thank the editors of the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu* for many of their publications, and especially the editors of the *Monumenta Xaveriana* for their very kind permission to quote from the Letters, a permission given on the condition that the translations were faithful. I think I can vouch for this, for they were made by my friend, the late Rev. David Macdonald, B.D., of Kinlochewe, who had an intimate and exact knowledge of Spanish, and a fine literary sense in translating. I am also deeply indebted to the outstanding modern biographers of the Saint, J. M. Cros and A. Brou.

E. A. R.

Aberdeen
December 1929

EDITORIAL NOTE

This volume is the tenth of a uniform series of new missionary biographies, in the production of which a group of unusually able writers are collaborating.

While these volumes contain valuable new material, this is not their main objective. The aim rather is to give to the world of to-day a fresh interpretation and a richer understanding of the life and work of great missionaries.

The enterprise is being undertaken by the United Council for Missionary Education, for whom the series is published by the Student Christian Movement.

K. M.
E. S.

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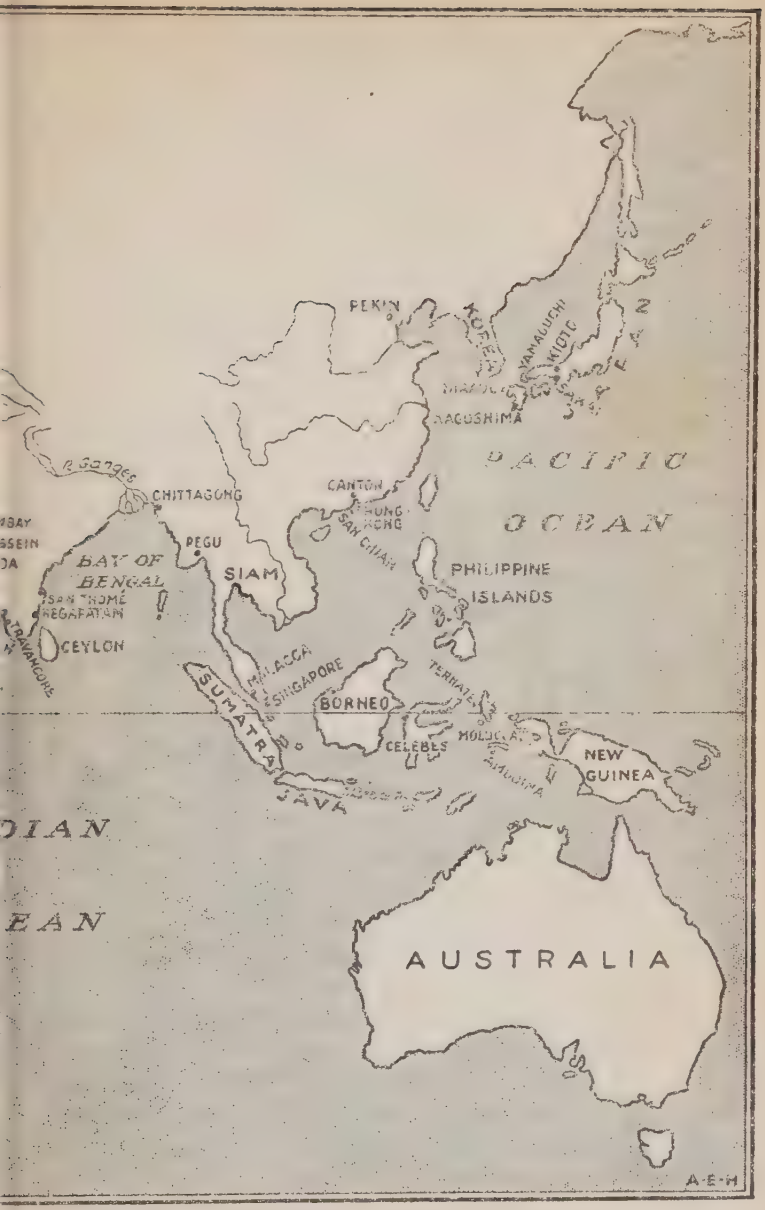
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CHAPTER I

EARLY DAYS

> Mannerly-hearted ! more than handsome face—
> Beauty's bearing or muse of mounting vein,
> All, in this case, bathed in high hallowing grace.
>
> G. M. Hopkins.

Even although the family seat of Maria de Azpilcueta y Xavier lay remote among the mountains, she spent most of her time there, and did not go much into society. But she could not help hearing things. And from all accounts the country was in a most unsettled state. One had hoped that when the Moslem peril was over, there might have been some peace. Well, the Moslem peril was over, but as Maria awaited the birth of her third son, she could hardly move her eyes from the long white moorland road, where at any moment a horseman might appear with news of disaster and death. Her two elder boys were out fighting for Navarre, and her husband, Doctor Juan, said it was a desperate business. Since Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic sovereigns, had by their marriage in 1469 joined the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, the days of the independence of Navarre had been numbered. In 1492 they conquered Granada, and their dream of a united Spain seemed nearer than ever to fulfilment. But when, in 1504, Isabella had died, a period of anarchy had begun which was only to end with the establishment of the Emperor Charles V in 1523.

Meanwhile, up here in Xavier, it was hard sometimes to believe in the existence of that outer whirligig of disaster and sin. Here, all was so devoutly ordered and so serene. The up-to-date, imposing building stood far from the beaten track, high among the stony moorland passes which lie around the source of the Ebro. Behind it rose the Pyrenean mountains, beneath its walls the young river Aragon sang, and to the south and east and west lay vineyards and olive gardens and wide pasture lands. A few miles off stood the town of Sanguessa. Half a league from Xavier there still remains the ruin of the ancient monastery of San Salvador de Leyre, and there the bones of the kings of old Navarre are gathered to the dust. But no sounds came up from Sanguessa, nor from San Salvador, to the lonely donjon on the high moor. The place was surrounded by a moat, and by a wall with turrets and battlements. Outside the ingenious drawbridge stood a *castelet*. The main building was flanked by four towers. The entrance door, over which the arms of Xavier were blazoned, was guarded by a portcullis, and within this door was another tower. There were wonderful little stone staircases winding up these towers, with loopholes here and there where the light streamed in. And now, as Maria dreamed and waited, she could see herself years ago, a small young maiden in ample stiff brocades, peeping out at each loophole with delight, as her grave and learned bridegroom helped her up and down the difficult steps. This place was one of the child's wedding gifts to him, and they had made it their home.

And here, long ago it seemed now, in her girlhood,

she had borne five children, and the youngest of these five was nine years old. And the eldest were out at the wars. Oh, if they would only come riding in now, safe and well, before she was brought to bed! But the long white road was still and bare. Next door to her chamber was the chapel, and she could hear the priests chanting the sacred offices of the Passion of Christ, for it was Thursday of Holy Week in the year 1506. That night her youngest son was born, and when the time of his baptism came, they resolved to call him after St Francis of Assisi, who had carried on his hands and his feet the marks of his crucified Lord. When the ceremony was over the baptismal robe was taken off and hung up in the chapel beside the five little robes of his elder brothers and sisters—Juan's and Miguel's still white and fair, the others beginning to grow dusty and grey, and blending with those of the children of bygone centuries.

Francis' father was a Doctor of Laws, of the University of Bologna, and had for many years been an adviser at the Court of Navarre. His family was ancient and honourable, if not so aristocratic as that of his wife. At the end of the fourteenth century these Basques had quitted their original home in Jasso, and settled in a village of some fifteen fires which lay in the midst of the vast forests on the southern slopes of the western Pyrenees. As the century wore on the family of Jasso grew in importance, and the road to the village of San Juan became worn with the hoofs of couriers' horses as the King's messengers cantered to and from the Court of Navarre with papers of State.

About 1445 Francis' grandfather was made auditor of the royal accounts. He married into an old Navarrese family, and his king gave him the handsome estate of Ydocin. This was a second home for the family at Xavier. The boys and girls found it good, after living on the windy, stony heights, to go down into the warm valley, and play among the trees, and bathe in the bright river pools. But that was for the elder children alone. Little Francis never went down to the valley of Ybargoiti, for when he was six months old Philip of Austria died suddenly, and all Spain was put into confusion. Isabella's widower, Ferdinand, became dominant once more, and it was a fatal hour for Navarre when he gained control of the eastern passes of the Pyrenees. From then until the final annexation in 1515 the little kingdom struggled in its death-agonies, and Doctor Juan spent body and soul in the attempt to maintain a lost cause. The crisis came when the Emperor, the Venetians, the Pope, and Henry VIII of England joined in the Holy League against France, and King John of Navarre, across whose lands troops had to pass on their way from Spain into France, allied himself to Louis XII. The Duke of Alva marched on Navarre, probably bearing with him the General Papal Bull against all opponents of the Holy League. John fled to Bayonne and Pampeluna surrendered. France gave no help to her ally, and in 1515 Navarre was formally annexed to Castile.

Till near the end the optimism of Doctor Juan had been unshaken. But the failure of all his hopes, added to the effects of the toil and anxiety of those last six years, proved too much for the ardent

patriot, and a few months after Ferdinand had annexed Navarre he died.

Although the castle stood alone on the hill-side, it held within its gates a large and varied community. From his mother's tapestried chamber, or the wide rooms where his married sister's boys and girls played when they came to visit the uncle who was younger than themselves, Francis would stray through galleries hung with the armour of the ancestors whom he shared with the kings of Navarre and of Aragon, and wander on till he came to the chapel where the priests were chanting the holy offices of the day. Sometimes the altar was deserted, and then he could go and look at the mysterious crucifix which had been found many years ago in a crevice of the castle wall. Before his intellect was disturbed by the problems of sin and pain, his imagination had become stored with the symbols of war and suffering and sacrifice.

Nor was it only in silent gallery or chapel that he learned of these things. In the dungeon beneath the great tower lay the civil prisoners of the locality. The child could stand on the outer wall of the moat and see their faces peering through the bars, while he shouted innocent greetings to them, or chanted to them fragments of his nursery rhymes.

But there were more sinister figures lurking beneath the castle walls than these. From time immemorial the place had been a sanctuary for all hunted and persecuted sinners. Unlike the old Hebrew cities of refuge to which only those who had killed any person unwittingly might flee, these feudal asylums opened their gates even to those "who thrust their enemies out of hatred, or hurled

at them, or lay in wait for them, or in enmity smote them."

Francis was a Basque both on his mother's and on his father's side, and not all of these robbers and murderers, Frenchmen, Castilians, Navarrese, as they listened to his boyish talk, could understand his words. This aboriginal people were the last race to accept the Roman yoke, and they alone of all the peoples of the south kept their language pure from the romantic influence. Francis was very proud of this predominating strain in his blood. On more than one occasion, we know, he declared himself a Basque, and when he lay dying on the island of Sanchian all the other tongues that he had acquired were forgotten, and he murmured his last words in the language of his earliest days.

Yet he must have learned something from these dark inhabitants of his home, too. There he saw "the thorns which grow upon this rose of life," and learned that there were wild worlds on the yon side of those sheltering hills of Xavier, and wild sins whose names had never even crossed his mother's lips.

But the pervading atmosphere of the castle was not a sombre one. There were long sunny afternoons when the old fortress rang with children's voices, and gay winter nights when soldier cousins and uncles and brothers came home from the wars unhurt and raised the sounds of revelry among the rafters of the banqueting hall. Francis himself was a notable athlete; this passion was to cost him somewhat in later years when, drunk with the elation produced by the Spiritual Exercises of Loyola, he tied cords round his calves and spoiled his powers of

jumping for ever, because he had gloried too much in the legs of a man. Tennis was a favourite game—*pelota*, or *jeu de paume*, they called it, because instead of using a racket they wore heavy gloves and hit the ball with the palm of the hand.

There was good sport, too, among the hills: a destructive eagle to be torn from its eyrie, a wolf to be tracked by torchlight to his lair, shy trout to tease from the tarns. And then at home there was always the same peaceful, well-ordered routine. Most of the families in their set had much the same standards as had Francis' father and mother. But in their social life they were constantly rising up against difficulties. This revival of letters was all very well, but with it seemed to have come a revival of paganism, a lower moral standard, laxer ideals of family life. It was not so bad here as in Italy, travellers said, though there were many distinguished Italian households who still upheld the old traditions.[1] But there was constantly, for example, a difficulty and some embarrassment about the Xavier children's visits to their uncle Pedro in Pampeluna. A mysterious shadow had fallen across that household. All that the young people knew was that it had something to do with their cousin Juan's affection for the beautiful Maria Periz de Herice. She did look very lovely on fête days in her low-bodiced dress, her long sleeves flying behind her; Francis doted, as young boys will, on her embroidered ruff and the bands of jewelled velvet round her hair. It was not surprising that his cousin Juan loved her so well. But his parents told him that both Juan and Maria were

[1] See Domenichi's *Treatise on Household Government*, Landucci's *Diary*, or the *Letters* of Alesandro degli Strozzi.

very wicked, and so was Juan's brother, cousin Esteban, who had had to run away in order to escape being put into prison. These three, and the prisoners in the castle dungeon at home, were the only people he knew who were not good and devout.

The year just before Francis' birth had seen the reconstruction and enlargement of the private chapel at Xavier, the foundation of a clergy-house, and the presentation of numerous lands and increments for the upkeep of the clergy and of the services. The clergy-house adjoining the chapel was really a little monastery; no women under sixty were permitted within its walls, no games were allowed, no sport save fishing; at every Mass there was confession. In the chapel itself High Mass was now chanted daily; daily vespers were sung, and on feast days and on Sundays there were other services. In an alcove there was a little book bound in leather, with a gold clasp, and there the ordinances of Santa Maria of Xavier were inscribed. Here Francis could read how his father and mother had vowed many devout vows, both for themselves and for their children. There had been, this little book revealed, in both their lives a great reconversion and rededication shortly before the birth of their youngest child.

Maria's eldest son, Miguel, was eleven years older than Francis, and Juan was two years younger than Miguel. All the three sisters were much older. Before Francis was born Madeline was a lady-in-waiting at the Court of Isabella the Catholic. She was noted for her beauty and her virtue and her charm, but while still young she retired to a convent. The present Duke of Feria traces his parentage back in the direct line to another sister, Maria Periz. The

remaining sister died a grandmother in 1535, while Francis was just about to leave the University of Paris.

In the nursery, in the kitchen, in the hall, the talk was always of battles and campaigns. As Francis grew older he would sit out in the garden under the shade of the olives, with his book on his knees. A new book came, a lovely book, called *Amadis of Gaul.* Amadis, the Child of the Sea, was a boy about his own age, but he surely was going to have great adventures : " *he shall enterprise and finish with honour that wherein others have failed, and such deeds shall he do, as none would think could be begun or ended by body of man . . . cruel of heart shall he be against those who deserve it and in all the world he shall be the knight who most loyally maintains his love.*"

One spring day, when Francis was ten years old, a horseman galloped up the hill with the news that Ferdinand was dead ; that Navarre, in the desperate hope of regaining her independence, had risen again ; that the troops of King John had been surprised in the Val de Roncal ; and that, among others, four soldiers of the house of Jasso had been taken prisoners. His brothers, so far, were safe, but any day might bring tidings of fresh disaster. Each day then was just a waiting for the news of life or death, and one day, while they waited, a troop of horsemen clattered into the courtyard, bearing orders from the Governor of Spain to demolish the fortifications of the castle. From their high windows Francis and his mother and his Aunt Violante watched them as they smashed the outer walls, and the watch-towers, and the ingenious drawbridge, and destroyed all the battlements. Then the soldiers came inside and they

could hear them breaking open the loopholes. There were no gateways left, and all the great doorways of wood were burned, and the outer stairways and the tower of San Miguel entirely demolished. The well-ordered garden was a desert of broken stones and charred beams and trampled flowers.

The glory of Xavier was departed, but Maria de Azpilcueta still lived there with her youngest son. We know nothing of his schooling, but he most likely had as a tutor one of the priests from the *abbadia* or clergy-house which adjoined the private chapel. If he went to school at Sanguessa or Pampeluna, it was only for a year or two before going to the university. His mother's cousin, Martin de Azpilcueta, who came to Xavier after the death of Doctor Juan, may have been his teacher. This uncle, his senior by only twelve years, had, we read, "a faithful heart, a beautiful character, a pliant humour. Once known, he was always loved, and every sight of him was a joy." This man was Francis' guardian from his tenth until his nineteenth year.

The family at Xavier was no longer wealthy. The fortune as well as the life of Doctor Juan had been spent for his king. In 1519 his widow asked the King of Castile for an indemnity for the damage done to the castle, and at the same time she asked for the payment of moneys which had been due to her husband from the treasury of Navarre at the time of his death. She was promised certain sums, but the money was never given to her. The collection of the numerous dues and taxes, which formed a great part of the family income, had been neglected during the last arduous years of Doctor Juan's life, and many who had ceased to pay refused to begin

again. Long afterwards an old shepherd used to tell how he and the three young gentlemen from the castle, Miguel, Juan and Francisco, used to pursue the herdsmen who drove the cattle across the lands of Xavier without bringing them in to be counted and taxed. The young gentlemen must have enjoyed that sport.

It was when Francis was fifteen years old that Ignatius Loyola had his leg smashed by a cannon ball at the siege of Pampeluna.

It is possible that Francis' elder brother may have shot the ball, which did a bigger stroke of business for the Roman Church that moment than many a Pope did in his lifetime. For Loyola, a faithful subject of the Emperor Charles, was defending the town against the insurgents, the old subjects of John of Navarre. And while Loyola lay suffering agonies in the attempt to have his leg elegantly set, he took stock of his vanity and of his former ideas of fame and glory. But of all that later. In the meanwhile the insurgents were defeated at Noain, but the young men from Xavier were among those who refused to surrender, and in the general pardon of 1523 their names stand in the list of those who are excepted from grace, and they are condemned to forfeiture of all their possessions and to death. But they were not caught; they had grown fleet of foot, up there in Xavier. At last both sides became weary, and two years later the patriots were given permission to return to their homes and lands with honour, if they would take the oath of allegiance to the Emperor. This they did.

When Miguel and Juan came back to Xavier, they found that their little brother Francisco had grown

into a tall lad of eighteen years, sunburnt, bookish, athletic. Most of all, bookish. He had no hankerings after a soldier's life, but he was full of eager talk of Paris, and of the students and professors there. If he had been less ambitious, less sure of himself, he would certainly, considering the position and the poverty of Xavier, have been content to go either to the University of Salamanca or to Alcala; but this young man knew what he wanted, and knew how to get it. He knew it would mean hardship and poverty, but he would go, all the same.

Besides, Paris was farther away than Salamanca or Alcala, and Francis Xavier, from the beginning, always wanted to push farther on to lands unknown.

CHAPTER II

THE PARIS UNDERGRADUATE

I was the Dreamer, they the Dream ; I roamed
Delighted through the motley spectacle ;
Gowns grave, or gaudy, doctors, students, streets,
Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, gateways, towers :
Migration strange for a stripling of the hills . . .

WORDSWORTH.

OFF galloped Francis for Paris, then, while they were pressing the grapes in the year 1525. The inundating family poverty did not appear to have damped even so much as his buckled shoon. His tailors' bills were notorious, but he certainly cut a fine figure and I think that the best horse that remained in those depleted stables went beneath him that morning. All the same, he was going to work, and work hard, for he knew well that although there was nothing doing in the army nowadays, there were still fine positions open to well-educated young ecclesiastics of good family.

Eagerly, at the journey's end, he flung off his Spanish cloak, donned the long black cape and pointed hat of the Parisian student, and set out to explore the place which for the next eleven years was to be his Alma Mater.

He was besieged by such companions as are ever ready to befriend the *béjaunes*.[1] Eagerly they showed him the sights of the town, and assisted him

[1] *Béjaune* (bec-jaune = yellow bill), freshman.

to spend his full purse. One of the chief expeditions was to the towers of the Church of Notre Dame. From thence he could gain the best idea of his new surroundings. There, before him, lay the great trefoil, city, university, town, interpenetrating yet distinct. On the red shields of the city they had blazoned a ship, because the island seemed to them like some great vessel stuck in the mud and run aground in the middle of the Seine. Near the prow Francis could see the delicately poised spires of the *Sainte Chapelle*. Close by, from the water's edge, where the laundresses were washing and beating their linen, singing as they worked, rose the towers of the Palace of Justice. The river was hardly visible, for every bridge was laden with houses. Within the walls of the city he could distinguish more than twenty churches, some of them heavy and old, many of them quite modern and very elegant.

And there to the west the autumn foliage was reddening in the King's gardens and the falling leaves began to reveal the *Ile du Passeur*. The King was a prisoner in Madrid, but the gardens were not quite deserted. His mother, the Queen-Regent, was taking her pleasure there now, after some exciting days and weeks of heresy-hunting. Francis had much to learn from his companions about the religious situation in Paris at the moment. It was very different from the Spanish situation. Reformation had been going on in the peninsula for a long time, but it had taken place *within* the Church; in Spain the reformers were not heretics as here and in Germany they appeared to be. In Spain reform had had its terrible aspect under Torquemada and

the Inquisitors-General. How terrible and how irreligious a thing the Inquisition had been Francis was most likely quite unaware. He knew only that on the whole the movement had been popular, because it had spelt ruin and confusion to the Jewish population. But there had also been in the peninsula a genuine revival, led by Cardinal Mendoza and Cardinal Ximenes. It was Ximenes who had reformed the Franciscan Order. His reinforcement of the original rules had been so strict that hundreds of the brothers had left Spain rather than obey him. Nor had he confined his reform to his own Order. In his capacity of Regent he had taken advantage of the liberty given to the Spanish Crown to confer benefices or to dismiss churchmen from their offices. He had visited monasteries and convents, and purified the Church to such good effect that the accusations poured out by the Protestant reformers against the clergy and against monastic life in general hardly applied to Spain at all.

Under Ximenes, who was later made Grand Inquisitor, the severity of the Inquisition was modified, and its procedure, to a certain extent at least, made less brutal. Nothing perhaps did more to make a union of the German and Spanish reformers seem at least within the bounds of possibility than the work of this great Cardinal. Before the Diet of Worms (1521) such a union had been seriously contemplated, but that Diet revealed a gulf between the two religious parties that could not be crossed—to the Spaniards a General Council was an infallible authority, and to Luther it was not; and soon, in Spain at least, every other reform, and all other reformers, were either to be merged into or over-

shadowed by the supreme influence of that Society, still unborn, which was also to alter the whole tenor of Francis' life. But he, as he stood on the towers of Notre Dame and heard his companions talk of reformation and heresies, had no clear vision or grasp of the present religious situation. And if any of his contemporaries had such a vision, they had paid for it with coins which Francis had not yet earned.

Meanwhile, the other fellows said, as they straddled about the coping-stones and gargoyles, the trial against the Lutherans had been so far successful, and the worst of the heretics were in prison. They told him that Le Fèvre's New Testament was in ashes and he and his friends hiding in Strasburg. Who was Le Fèvre ? Well, he was an interesting character, a pity to have missed seeing him, but he was gone now, no doubt for good. They were glad he was safely out of it : they had smelt human flesh roasting once or twice lately—better not call them martyrs or you were let in for being called a heretic—but they didn't like it, and would not like to have smelt that dear old man. He had been too free, the Senatus said, in his criticisms of the accepted version of Aristotle. Those antiquated doctors knew well enough that scholasticism was the foundation upon which the whole academic show rested, upon which the whole Church rested. Humanism and heresy went hand in hand. And Jacques Le Fèvre d'Etaples was too well acquainted with those newly-unearthed Aristotelian manuscripts in Italy to please the Dryasdusts who gloried in Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas. Then there was his commentary on the Epistles of St Paul. There he laid down the principle of the sovereign authority of the Word of

God. The old men of the Sorbonne had bolted (figuratively speaking) when they heard, further, that he had a manuscript translation of the New Testament in his house. Perhaps Francis had seen, as he rode into Paris, the placards they had stuck up: "The Holy Scriptures are Approved in the Latin Language and Ought thus to Remain." Anyhow his MS. was burnt now, and they would gladly have burnt him with it, if they had caught him.

The King's mother had been busy helping the Pope in this affair. You could just make out the gorgeous little figure now and then, away down yonder in the *Ile du Passeur*, as she passed to and fro between the thinning cherry leaves. It was too bad of the old lady to have turned against Le Fèvre now, for it was she herself, with her daughter Margaret of Angoulême, who, in another mood, had urged the professor to undertake this work. Some of the old priests must have got round her. They hated good grammar more than they did bad lives. And they hated anything simple. They were too petty to love simplicity. Now a child could understand Le Fèvre when he preached. But why was he preaching against the Church? We must before all things be faithful to the Church! Anyhow, he told us more about Jesus Christ than ever we heard before. . . . So the fellows talked as they still loitered upon the towers with Francis, and he saw that they were uncertain what to believe and some of them were afraid to hear what the others were saying. At last they all began to straggle down the narrow winding stairs and left him standing there alone, but he could just hear one of them saying, in the distance, "I don't know whether he's right or

wrong, but he says anyhow, that if we become as little children and simply believe in Jesus, we shall be saved."

All this talk was rather unsettling. As soon as you felt you were safely emerging from one tangle you came into another one, worse than before. It had seemed such a blessed escape to leave the tumult and warfare of Navarre behind, and the towers of Paris had appeared so serene and so peaceful, seen from afar. But it was a deceptive calm. This war of the mind and spirit was more terrible than the other. And everyone seemed conscript here.

Down among the colleges Francis could see the abbeys of the Mathurins, the Bernardins, the Augustins. There rose the square tower of St Genevieve, and yonder stood the Sorbonne itself. Were the dreams of ecclesiastical honours, which, realized, must justify him to his house for having renounced a life of soldiery, to be interfered with by this crisis in the Church ? He wished he knew. And then he saw a strange white cliff, so high, so wrapped in the October mists, that it seemed almost to be hung like a drifting cloud in the sky—a mass of turrets and windmills—but so soft, so dream-like, that he feared it would be gone while he gazed.

That is *Mons Martyrum*. There in the crypt of the Church of Our Lady lie the bones of good Saint Denis. And there, Francis, at the close of your student years, you will take the cup of salvation and pay your vows unto the Lord.

If the afternoon on the towers of Notre Dame was thrilling and beautiful, the hours in the college class-rooms were a hard trial, especially to one who was fastidious in his manners and tastes. The

College of St Barbe, where Francis had entered, was dark and ill-ventilated, and bounded by narrow streets that reeked with offal. Lectures began at 5 a.m. In 1452 benches had been prohibited and scholars bidden to sit on the floor—for humility's sake, the authorities said, being too proud to confess that they were short of money. So on the floor Francis sat, on straw in winter, on mown grass in summer, while the regent, rod in hand, lectured from his solitary chair. Here and there a lamp reeked, and round it clustered a knot of students who took notes, or wrote letters to their mothers or their sweethearts. Each student was allowed three sheets of paper per week. Some of them were not half-way through their teens; others were middle-aged men. Some were there to learn, many to rest, to write, to read, or to fool about. From time to time the professor would rise, thread his way through the black-cloaked figures, and single out a special offender for punishment. Montaigne, with good reason, pitied those poor young students. "It is a very prison of captivated youth," he says. "Come upon them when they are going to their lessons, and you hear nothing but whipping and brawling, both of children tormented and masters besotted with anger and chafing. How far from the way are those who set out to allure a child's mind to his book—a tender, fearful child—with a stern frowning countenance and hands full of rods!"

Vives too, the great Spanish educationist, has very severe things to say about the University of Paris in those days. "One discusses before dinner, during dinner, after dinner, in public, in private, in all places, at all times. The climax is as to whether the

pig is led to market by the man who is taking it, or by the string he holds." Surely Francis Xavier was recalling such futile hours when, years afterwards, he wrote from India that he often had a mind to come to Europe, to Paris, above all to the university, and "shout aloud like a madman who has lost his senses" to the students, reminding them of the things that really mattered.

Ribadeneira, Loyola's contemporary biographer, and therefore also a contemporary of Xavier, gives us a succinct account of a normal day at college: "Rise at four, at five lecture, followed by Mass, and breakfast composed of a roll. From eight to ten lecture, at eleven masters and pupils dine together while parts of the Bible or Lives of the Saints were read aloud. Then, for recreation, the reading of poetry and questions on the preceding lesson. Another class from three to five; at six supper, repetition, *salut du Sainct-Sacrament*, and to bed."

Francis was enrolled as a *cameriste-portioniste*, that is, he paid both for food and for lodging, and boarded with the principal, who was required "to hear diligently the lessons of the scholars, and faithfully to instruct them alike in life and in doctrine." There were various other kinds of students. *Bursars* were taught, lodged and fed free of charge. *Cameristes* fed themselves, but were provided with lodging under charge of certain regents known as *pedagogues*. Besides all these there was a large body of outside students known as *martinets*—birds of passage—who attended the class-rooms if they had time or inclination, or any special mischief on hand. These men formed the hooligan element, which at that time made up a considerable part of student life. To the inner

ring of this group belonged the *galoches*. They trailed their noisy sabots through the colleges at all seasons, a lazy unkempt crew, never taking any examinations, grey-haired parasites and loafers. A few of them hired themselves out to the wealthier students as servants. Such was Miguel the Navarrese, Francis Xavier's man, " a sad person of low birth and an evil life." There was yet another class, the *serviteurs*, sons of the poorest citizens, and they, in return for washing and scrubbing the floors, and doing the humblest work of the house, were allowed to attend any of the classes they chose.

Francis, like all students with serious ambitions, elected to take the Arts course, which led up to the protracted theological studies. He had first his examination in Greek, History, Grammar, and Latin versification. One or two years, mostly occupied with logic, followed, then came the examination for Bachelorship. A year later perhaps (but the time varied) the student sat for the licentiateship examination. This passed, there followed a sort of minor graduation ceremony, a diploma was publicly given, and the chancellor, in his robes of state, bestowed the Apostolic blessing. Towards the end of the same year it was in order to ask for the " bonnet " and to be publicly declared Master. One was not, however, full Master or Master Regent, until one had been appointed as Professor in one of the colleges. These posts were nearly always occupied by youths on their way to graduate in one of the higher faculties, and they were only held from year to year. Candidates were hardly ever rejected at the actual examinations, though a very small proportion of those who entered the university ever

became Masters. As the years of study went on, they were weeded out, mainly on moral or social grounds. One made the mistake of going to see an execution in the middle of an examination: that failed him; another took part in a knife fight with certain tailors; another spoke rudely to a master: that ended his academic career; another was sent down because his academic dress was not properly put on; another because he went about in disguise.

Xavier's college, St Barbe, had a higher reputation than any other in Paris. Some one compared it to the wooden horse of Troy, because it contained so many famous men. Spaniards and Portuguese especially frequented it. Its founder, Geoffrey Lenormant, appears to have been graced by an unusual modesty, for instead of calling the college after himself—an undisputed perquisite of founders—he called it after the learned St Barbara, who like St Catherine is supposed to have confuted the pagan doctors. The principal of the college, de Gouvea, was a Portuguese, and one of the most progressive members of the university. He saw, almost before anyone else, the clamant need of the new colonies, so lawless, so God-forsaking, for devout priests and missionaries. He used all his influence with his kings to persuade them to provide education at St Barbe for that purpose. About a year after Xavier's arrival in Paris, it was announced that fifteen bursaries were to be given by Portugal for missionary students. But it was not by that road that Francis was to set out for India.

The college was not dominated by the Portuguese. It had the best of both the Scots and the French students, and, most portentous fact for Francis,

Loyola the Basque was journeying thither, *lucerna ardens et lucens.*

During the whole of Francis' first winter session the King, Francis I, was a prisoner in Spain, and the discipline both in town and university was even more lax than usual. Orders were issued and re-issued, but the authority of the university could no longer cope with the rising spring-tide of life, nor with its inevitable froth of lawlessness and folly.

Peter Faber was the man Francis got to know best in his first year at St Barbe. They shared the same room. They were the same age, but they sprang from very different surroundings. Peter Faber had grown up tending his father's sheep on his native heights of Savoy. He was neither the first nor the last shepherd lad to turn saint and scholar. Among the writings he has left is his beautiful *Memorial*, an autobiography of part of his life.

" I went to Paris," he writes there, " to the College of St Barbe in the year 1525. I was nineteen. . . . I pray to God that He may ever keep me in grateful remembrance of the good things He gave to me, both bodily and spiritually by various means, during these three and a half years. I put among the foremost of my mercies that I had such a master, and that I found in the room of his college in which I was installed such good companionship ; I speak above all of Master Francis Xavier, who is of the Company of Jesus."

Many years afterwards, when he was in Cochin in 1548, Francis wrote of Faber as the dearest of all the departed souls of the Company.

Mathurin Cordier, one of the men who influenced

Calvin in his youth, was almost certainly one of Xavier's professors. Cordier did not join the reformers till 1528, though long before that time he had been, in the deepest sense of the word, a reformer. His orthodoxy perhaps gave him a greater influence over Francis than he would otherwise have had, and there are passages in the letters from India curiously akin to this passage from the writings of Cordier:

"In the schools of this city Christ is so neglected! There is so little care for the Word of God. How many of the masters are there who lead their pupils in their rooms or at the lectures to the love of God, or the study of things divine? How many of them prefer a student who is virtuous and honourable to one who is learned or clever with his pen? What teacher is there who places love above gain? . . . Why do you force the students? Why do you struggle with them? Why do you torture them? Do you wish to teach them easily? Begin with principles. Begin with speaking of God and of the things of heaven. Teach these boys; do not leave them to themselves, but by divine grace lead them, I say, to love the Christ, to breathe the Christ, to have the Christ on their lips. Pour it, as it were, drop by drop on the souls of your pupils; make it enter and penetrate into them."

George Buchanan, too, the Scots classicist, was up at the same time as Francis. He arrived in Paris in 1520, and was more or less connected with the university for many years. In 1529 he was a professor at St Barbe's, and therefore in the same house with Francis Xavier and Ignatius Loyola.

One wonders if that most astute fisher of men, the great founder of the Order of the Jesuits, ever set his nets for George Buchanan. Did Loyola know the measure of his power and shun defeat; did he weigh the Scottish humanist and find him wanting in that which he required, or was he in this instance blind to what lay, perhaps, within his grasp? For Buchanan was in those days of the stuff of which the counter-reformers were compact: intellectual, a man steeped in affairs, a seeker of truth, a malcontent, yet no Lutheran.

Erasmus had been in Paris some years earlier, but the study of Greek had then scarcely begun, and the fare and lodging disgusted one whose fastidiousness was in advance of his times. "I carried nothing away from Paris," he said, "but a body infested with disease, and a plentiful supply of vermin."

Scholars passed and repassed across the Channel. While Erasmus came to Oxford, John Major and Florence Wilson and a host of lesser stars followed in the train of Buchanan to Paris. Some of these Scotsmen most likely saw, if they did not meet, the theologian who has since become almost the special property of their race, for Calvin left the College Montaigu about the same time as Loyola arrived there. Loyola only remained there for a short time before gravitating towards the more liberal St Barbe. It is curious that Calvin had tolerated the atmosphere of the College Montaigu for so long as he did. Its principal at that time was the most reactionary man in the university, Noël Beda. Erasmus said that in one Beda there were three thousand monks. The college seems to have been even more disagreeable than the principal. It was

famous even then for its exaggerated asceticism, its ceaseless punishments, its indescribable filth, and its unrelenting studies. It is of it that Erasmus writes :

" The beds were so hard, the food so meagre, the labours so exacting, that many youths of splendid promise, after the first years of their sojourn in this college, became mad or blind or leprous, if they did not die. Some of the bedrooms, because they were close to the lavatories, were so dirty and infected that none of those who lodged there came away alive, or without the germ of some grave disease. . . . Oh, how many rotten eggs I ate there, and how much mouldy wine I drank ! "

At this time Francis' sympathies lay with the Lutherans, and he frequented their society. To do so implied either great bravery or great recklessness, for the martyrs had already begun to burn. And while he read the writings of Luther and loved the Lutherans, and loved still more the shepherd lad who had vowed perpetual celibacy and had dedicated himself to the priesthood, while he passed all his examinations and associated with the best and the worst men of his college, wandering the streets at night with the wildest of them, as he long afterwards confessed, he still found ample time to devote to his tailor. Old Tursellinus says : " Francis, desirous as usual to maintain his nobility and estimation among his equals, fell into extraordinary expense." And he goes on to relate that Francis' sister Madeline, the nun, wrote : " Do not send him home ; rather help him with his studies, for I am sure that he will become a

great servant of God and a pillar of the Church." There had been a suggestion from home that he should be recalled. The household of Xavier was now extremely poor. Maria had exhausted all her resources in the law courts in the attempt to get hold of the sums which had been promised to her, and we can well imagine that she was anxious to see her youngest son arrange his affairs with a little more sympathy towards the family situation. But the advice of Madeline, the nun, was taken, and many years after her prophetic letter used to be exhibited among the family treasures at Xavier.

About this time both Francis' brothers married, and in 1529 his mother died and the old home was broken up.

It was just during those months, which must have been the loneliest of his life, that he found himself beginning to stir beneath the supreme fascinations of Ignatius Loyola.

CHAPTER III

THE COMING OF IGNATIUS LOYOLA

What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul ?

It was now eight years since Miguel and Juan, Francis Xavier's elder brothers, had gone up against Pampeluna on the fateful day when Ignatius Loyola, defending the city, had been crippled for life by the insurgents. Loyola's youthful hopes of military and knightly glory had not been very easily broken, for when by reason of his lameness he could no longer serve his country on the field of battle, he remembered the great reputations of the saints, and was glad to hope that after all he might not find the gates of fame closed against him. It did not matter how poor or how crippled the soldiers were who fought about the walls of Jerusalem or Babylon. The Virgin Mary would be to him " the Lady more high than duchess or countess " of his favourite romance. He already heard her say, like the lady whom Amadis was bidden to serve, that " it pleased her." Yes, there she stood, with her Child in her arms, and with one long look she rapt his soul from his earth to her heaven. This vision inspired him, as soon as his wounds were healed, to leave his father's castle and go up into the mountains. It was a difficult journey. His injured leg was still helpless. But he took with him two servants, and

the faithful ass upon which his brother had mounted him carried its strange burden carefully up the passes, till, high among the naked rocks, they found the Church of Our Lady of Montserrat.

There the cripple hobbled from his beast, and like his boyish hero, Amadis, the Child of the Sea, "he armed himself all save his head and his hands, and made his prayer before the altar, beseeching God to grant him success in arms and in the love which he bore his Lady."

At dawn on the third day, his prayers and vigils over, the future founder of the great militant Order took off his sword and his spurs, exchanged his knightly dress for the coarse garb of a hermit, and descended the rocky path on foot. He was determined to go to Jerusalem, but being afraid that his friends would find him at Barcelona and detain him, he made first for the Dominican convent of Manresa..

From that time he no longer called himself Iñigo Recalde de Loyola, but Ignatius, because of his love for the martyred bishop of Antioch.

At Manresa his soul weathered a storm that has reminded many historians of that storm which had come upon Luther twenty years earlier in the convent at Erfurt. In both cases there was the same prolonged and anguished struggle, the same despairing resort to all the machinery of the medieval Church, the same sense of alienation from God through sin, the same hopeless effort to keep a law which unaided human effort cannot keep.

It has, strange to say, surprised many that the same peace came to both alike. But Luther's vindication of the doctrine of justification by faith does not necessarily appropriate that experience for

Protestantism. Loyola, like Luther, found rest in resting on the mercy of God.

It was from these experiences at Manresa, and from his ardent study there of Garcia de Cisneros and Thomas à Kempis, that the founder of the Jesuits began to build up the marvellous Spiritual Exercises. From these experiences, too, came a fresh rush of enthusiasm and joyfulness. From the hour when he discovered that his vigils and fastings and self-chastisements had failed to bring him nearer God, he distrusted the severer forms of asceticism. He begged his way to Palestine, where his enthusiasm and courage so alarmed the Christian population that they persuaded him to return to Europe. But he had "seen" something at Manresa, and he was not to be baffled. He put himself to school. The man of thirty-three sat on the benches of the school at Barcelona with little boys, to learn Latin and to prepare himself for the university. The little boys laughed at him. His brain, long unused to study, was slow to learn. But he learned.

Yet he could not keep to himself that which was both root and flower of all his endeavour. After school hours he went out into the streets and preached, and taught the children their catechism. The Church, seeing him so happy, happy to the point of ecstasy, suspected him of belonging to the heretical sect known as the Spanish Illuminati. One can understand their mistake. Ignatius was ordered to study theology for four years before dogmatizing again in public. This did not unduly discourage him. He went on doggedly with his studies in Alcala and Barcelona for a time, and then

one February day in 1528 he entered Paris, driving before him an ass laden with books. First he went to the College Montaigu, but presently he was in St Barbe, and sharing a room with Francis Xavier and Peter Faber.

It is not likely that the little room held much furniture: it was unusual for the students even to have beds in those days. In one corner, neatly arranged, we fancy, stood the books which the good ass had borne across the Pyrences. Among them was the manuscript Loyola had written and illuminated himself, a Life of Christ and of the Saints, the words and acts of our Lord in red and gold, those of Mary in blue, and those of the Saints in other colours. Beside it, a Latin Vulgate, surely, and his missal, and a copy perhaps of Garcia de Cisneros' *Manual of Devotion.* But the dearest possession of all was a copy of the *Imitation* of Thomas à Kempis, usually called *The Ecclesiastical Music* and supposed to be written by Gerson. Beside them lay the MS. of the Spiritual Exercises, which he had been working upon since 1522.

Xavier's library was no doubt more eclectic. He could not afford to possess many books, but there were lending libraries in the town. There was some jovial literature in circulation. *La Celestine* was in great demand: Ferdinand de Rojas had published it in 1499; everyone was asking, too, for the comedies of Torres de Naharro and of Gil Vicente. Easier to obtain from the libraries, because only read by the more cultivated, was the *Coplas de Manrique* (published in 1477), a gem of Spanish poetry, and one of the great elegies of literature. Longfellow, in later years, was to translate it into English. Rabelais

was still busy over the manuscript of his *Satires*. Who knows, had they appeared but a little earlier, where this compelling and destructive humour would have carried Francis' gay spirit? Would it have undermined his devotion to the Church, a devotion that had been faithfully tended at home throughout his childhood, and that was about to receive its determining direction from the finger of Loyola? It was very difficult ever to feel quite the same again towards the Church after reading the story of Gargantua and Pantagruel.

But, Rabelais apart, there was food enough for fear on Loyola's part for this disciple-elect of his.

"What is that in the corner there, Francis?"

"That, sir, is a copy of some really very interesting stuff written by Martin Luther; I hear it appeared ten years ago, but I only came across it lately."

Loyola was not himself if he thereupon began to denounce the reformer. His methods were more subtle and more sure. He was patient too. For the Pilgrim, as they called him, was, in spite of his smouldering beauty, too strange and disconcerting a figure to admire without a prelude of fear. But Ignatius, looking on Francis, had loved him, so cleanly built and unspoiled, so fluent with his Latin, so keen with his wit. "*I shall win him*," said the founder of the Jesuits. He did not talk much. His policy was rather to listen and sympathize, to understand his prey, to gain trust and affection, and then cast the net. Francis and Peter Faber did most of the talking; talking is always so easy in the presence of those rare people who seem to listen, not only to what you are saying, but to what you

are thinking. And Loyola, listening and calculating, prepared his big guns.

While, within the little room, the founder was awakening to the power of his personal magnetism, the rank and file of the armies where his battle was to be waged were elsewhere growing lively. Down in the Rue St Symphorien the students were shouting some very forceful tags of verse at each other; the Lutherans' verses made more sense, but the good Catholics made more noise, for they were in the majority.

Ignatius entered St Barbe some time before the beginning of the autumn term which was to see Francis—then in his twenty-fifth year—established as a lecturer in Greek in the college of Beauvais. Ignatius, who had been talking of heaven and hell on the house-tops as only saints and madmen do, had been allowed to enter St Barbe on the condition that he would leave the consciences of the other students alone. But even the nucleus-ideas of the scheme which was to leave its mark on European history were too much to be contained, if only for a few hours on end, in the mind of their originator. Among the restless group of men and boys sitting or lying on the grass-strewn floor of his lecture-room those early summer mornings, Professor Pena knew none so tiresome as Master Ignatius. At last he was reported to the principal, who vowed that this scholar of forty would be punished as he had not been since he was a child. After dinner masters and scholars, each armed with a whip, ranged themselves, according to an old custom, in a double row. The delinquent was awaited, but he did not appear. He ought to have come, when they were all ready,

and passed slowly down the row, taking from each as he passed a lash upon his bared back. Instead, after a little while of waiting, the principal's door opened, and principal and culprit came out arm in arm. De Gouvea made a short speech. "I have discovered Ignatius to be a good man, too zealous, lacking in discretion, but here and now in my name he promises to amend, and receives full pardon."

Among that patient and perhaps a little disappointed double row of students and lecturers might have been seen the brooding figure of George Buchanan. "It is certainly odd," says Hume Brown, his biographer, "to think that Buchanan, afterwards the co-churchman of Knox, should so nearly have missed the privilege of laying his ferule on the bare shoulders of the founder of the Society of Jesus."

In 1530 Xavier took his Arts degree, and the lectureship which he obtained at the college of Beauvais brought in enough to support him during his theological course. Although Le Fèvre d'Etaples, who had taught Greek as he taught the Gospels, "from the sources," had come and gone, the medieval Aristotle still held its place in Paris, and it is not likely that Xavier got behind the treatises of Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas. These scholastics had rendered an unforgettable service to the Church by giving her, for the first time, a version of the master in keeping with her own doctrines. For the earliest translations of Aristotle had been taken from the Arabic versions of the exiled Caliphs among the Nestorians, and these versions emphasized the anti-Christian aspects of his philosophy, the *unitas*

intellectus, the indestructibility of matter, the negation of personal immortality. So Aristotle had been banned by the Sorbonne until the labours of the great Dominicans had produced an orthodox philosopher. This then was the Aristotle upon which Xavier founded his lectures. The igniting spark of the Renaissance was destined to alight not upon his mind but upon his heart. Later on, the illuminating flames lit up the whole of his being, so that we say when we read some of his letters from the East, "Here is a great saint of God."

Meanwhile his old dreams of ecclesiastical distinction were not forgotten, and the preparation for the first step towards their fulfilment, the Doctorate in Theology, along with his own lectures, kept him hard at work. Although the theological course extended over so many years, the range of works studied was surprisingly small. Beyond the Bible and the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard no other textbook was used. And the *Sentences* were regarded as almost equal to the Bible in authority. It is shown there that the Mother of Christ must have been acquainted with the subject-groups of the Arts curriculum, the *Trivium* and the *Quadrivium*, and her knowledge in the faculties of medicine, civil and canon law, and theology is shown to have been considerable. Yet in spite of those crudities there was, then as always, the possibility of devout and profitable study. Robert Sorbonne himself, with a greatness which ought to have shamed many who taught in the place called by his name, had said that knowledge had no worth if it did not raise the soul towards God. "There are," he had said, "scholars who work ceaselessly in sharpening the

sword of the Word of God, and thus put it to use. Others amass thick volumes of argument and bind them in grand covers painted with red, and go home very proud of their booty, their bags full, their spirits empty."

Xavier's bag was getting full, but his spirit was restless and unsatisfied. The whole atmosphere of life, in the company of Ignatius, seemed in those portentous months to be charged with fire. The founder had not openly chosen his soldiers, nor formed his constitution. Yet with all his faculties strained to their utmost use, he was in his own mind picking his men and constructing his Order.

Faber and Xavier, his most intimate companions, were alternately repelled and attracted. Both began to see that their ambitions ran counter to those of Loyola, and both nursed their imperilled hopes with ardent, yet flickering, zeal. Francis took clerk's orders. He sent to Navarre for a formal title of his nobility and honourable descent. But even while he dictated his claims to the notary the words that Loyola loved to quote were ringing in his ears: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Meanwhile the supplies of money from home had entirely ceased, and he was poor to the point of suffering and actual privation. But Ignatius soon saw to his wants. "It was a door," says Xavier's French biographer, Brou, "which God had opened to him that he might enter this soul." Loyola gave him of the alms he had got from rich Spanish ladies, or from other friends during his vacation tours in England and Flanders. At the same time he highly praised his lectures on Aristotle, and brought

numbers of students to his classes. The young lecturer became very popular.

So Xavier began to love this man who seemed to know so well how to appreciate him, and he would pour out his plans to him as they sat at night in their little room at St Barbe. Ignatius listened with all his immense natural tact and charm and sympathy, yet always, the old biographer tells us, these talks ended with the words : " What shall it profit a man, Francis, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? "

And Francis could not forget those words, and there was no answer within him to the question. Months passed. In Polanco's chronicle we read that he had heard " our great moulder of souls say that the hardest block he ever had to do with was the young Francis in those early days." And old Tursellinus says, " He was a young man of great spirit with froward and over-thwart answers . . . but Patience at last overcame Pertinacity. And Xavier, being little by little made tractable by that so gentle and courteous usage, began to bear some respect towards him, and at last, touched by God's divine spirit, let himself be wholly ruled and guided by him."

Meanwhile the links which bound Francis to his early surroundings were falling away one by one. With his mother's death his home had been broken up and his youthful ambitions shaken. And now came the news of the death of his sister, the Abbess of Gandia, " a true spirit, who excelled in the practice of humility, love, prayer, gentleness and silence."

Once again, perhaps alone, and in a graver mood

than before, he climbed the spiral stairs of Notre Dame and looked down upon Paris.

It was more than eight years since he had stood there first, fresh from school, the spurs of undaunted ambition pricking his ardent spirit. And now— ? Life had grown very complex. What arid stretches of experience it held, what absurd laughter, what fruitless tears. And the wise doctors of the Sorbonne, amongst whom, in his young dreams, he had once seen himself, were mostly fat old men with heavy eyes and stubborn mouths. And the bishops were burning students whom he used to think good and wise. It was not worth being a bishop for that. During all those eight years he had never been home, and now he had no longer a home. The trophies that had once seemed valuable to him because he might lay them at his mother's feet had now a new and a harsher worth. Personal power, riches, authority, had acquired for him an attraction of their own. And in the Church it seemed as if ever since that night in May 1527, when the Imperialists had burst into Rome, it was doubly easy for his fellow-countrymen to attain distinction. It was a fine thing to be a Spaniard. They were gaining the whole world! Ah, "*What shall it profit a man? What shall it profit a man?*" These were the words Ignatius had teased him with, night and day, day and night. Did that inscrutable gargoyle-face of stone beside him not suggest the same question, as chin in hand, with gentle brows and mocking mouth, it fixed its great blank eyes on Paris ?

Paris had gained the worlds of philosophy and theology ; once, for scholars, all the roads of Europe had converged there ; but where was the soul of that

exquisite city now? Francis knew that the wisest men were turning to other centres of learning, that the Latin texts from which he expounded Aristotle were out of date. Thought was difficult and confused. But he could not blind himself to the fact that in Paris, at least, there was some real bond between the humanists and the religious reformers, between the new passion for truth from the "sources" of things and the new contempt for the Roman Curia. Luther was shouting that it was the Bible and not the Pope to which they must turn. Pico had lifted his head from his newly found manuscripts to say, "Philosophy seeks truth, theology finds it, religion possesses it," and had turned again to tales of the gods of Greece. No, this "truth" of the Protestants and the humanists was a cold thing; men should seek not an idea but a Person, serve not Humanity but the Church, the Bride. If Pico had put "God our Lord" in the place of "truth" he would have done better. Religion possesses God, that was what Francis was coming to believe. And it was religion that Paris lacked. But where was this religion to be found? Not surely in those burning piles where the Lutherans screamed out their last moments in anguish, nor yet—God grant—in the hands that held the torch to the faggot, nor in those tomes "bound in grand covers and painted with red" that Robert Sorbonne had laughed at, but that the old doctors down there had loved so well. What if it *were* religion that was carrying these heretics to their death? Loyola said that all reform must begin in the individual heart, that the only life that mattered was the life of the soul. Had Luther not said something like that too? And was

this zealot from Guipuzcoa, perhaps, after all, just leading them by another road to the same fire? He would leave this fanatical cripple before it was too late. And yet how he loved him! Could he leave him? His father and mother had died, and Loyola had taken him up. Loyola was praying for him continually. How kind he had been, and how generous! He must thank God for such a friend, nay—the subjugation was almost complete—for such a master.

At this time Peter Faber had gone home to Savoy to bid his father and his friends farewell. He had offered his whole life to Loyola.

For seven months Francis and the founder were alone. When, at the beginning of 1534, Faber returned from Switzerland, Ignatius had won his second disciple. Francis wished to fling up his lectureship at once. Ignatius told him to hold on to it meanwhile, until he had taken his theological degree. He did not even give him the Spiritual Exercises.

So the Company, tentatively, began to take shape. The members of this Society were to bridge the gulf between the Crusaders and the modern missionaries. Its earlier dreams were of the Holy Land and the Sepulchre of our Lord: its loveliest first-fruit was to be Francis, the Apostle of the Indies.

Ignatius talked over the future with his disciples individually, and one by one, unknown to the rest, they were asked to go aside for some days and seek the guidance of God, and then to return at a stated time. One day Francis, Peter Faber, and four others all found themselves together with Ignatius, and when he with his magnetic skill began to

question them, they discovered with delicious astonishment and wonder that they were all of one mind and one purpose.

At this point they took the triple vow of poverty, chastity, and pilgrimage to Jerusalem. A day was fixed when they should all meet for conference in Venice and, if possible, proceed from there to the Holy Land. In Jerusalem they would once more ask special direction from God.

A few days later Ignatius and his six followers met as a Company for the first time. They had still to get permission from the Pope before they could constitute themselves as an Order. They assembled at the cathedral church of Notre Dame, and from thence, bannerless, trumpetless and unnoticed, the little black-robed band made its way to the heights of Montmartre. The citizens of Paris, who loved gay flags and banners and shouting and singing, would have jeered if you had told them that this was the most portentous procession that had threaded their streets for many a year. Yet so it was.

In the van limped Loyola with swift determined steps, his eyes burning, his brows inscrutable and calm. Behind him came those who were, in varying degrees, his devotees and God's. Faber with the loose gait and far-focused eyes of a shepherd, Xavier of medium height, dark, eager-limbed, his eyes meekly dropped, and a reverent gravity veiling, for this great occasion, the wayward mouth that laughed so lightly and so well. Salmeron and Bobadilla were there too, both of them restless, energetic, impatient, full of fire. Salmeron was to prove a great preacher and to be Papal theologian at the Council of Trent. In the same Council, Lainez, "a

young man with the brain of an ancient sage," the most learned of this strange procession, was destined to be the dominating and fatal influence. Lastly, there was Rodriguez, the Portuguese, who was to leave written records of the early years of the Society.

Faber, who was the only priest present, celebrated Mass. After this consecration before the altar, they came out from the dark chapel, and sitting down by a spring near by, they broke their fast together and "spent the residue of that day together in holy and fraternal chat." And in the evening at set of sun they went homeward, praising and blessing the Lord.

CHAPTER IV

THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES AND XAVIER'S RELATION TO THE JESUITS

Show me, O Lord, where I can find Thee; I will follow like a dog, if only I learn the way of salvation.—IGNATIUS LOYOLA.

A FEW days later the term ended, and Francis employed the month of September in taking the Spiritual Exercises. He has left no record of his experiences during those days and weeks. But the way in which he always afterwards speaks of the Exercises, and his continual recommendation of them to others, shows that he believed they had done much for himself. Brou, his biographer, says, "Francis emerged from the Exercises changed into another man. From this time onward it is the life of a saint which we write." That is not a judgment lightly expressed, nor lightly to be dismissed from the mind. There did unquestionably follow upon the receiving of those Exercises, in the early days of the Order, lives of remarkable devotion and sanctity. Upon those Exercises were nourished the spirits of those who stemmed the tide of the Reformation over large tracts of Europe; from this discipline there rose up the great educationists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the most ardent and heroic missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church.

Loyola was not the first to find a time of retreat and self-recollection a necessity of life. Great souls,

of all races and all religions, have this need and this custom in common: the greater the spirit, the greater the need and desire for it, and the greater the power of finding time and scope for this divine energy. It may be said that those who make a retreat for a few days and weeks, now and then, merely effect for a time that religious attitude to life which other more saintly and equable souls sustain continually: "He leadeth them beside still waters." Religious experience for them is not just an oasis here and there in the dry desert of life, but a deep quiet river guiding them to the eternal sea. I think we have to admit that such is the ideal picture of the spiritual pilgrimage of the soul of man towards God. But no man liveth unto himself, least of all did He who went about doing good. Each of us is part of a society imperfect and incomplete, and the greater the man, the more this imperfection, this incompletion, impinges on his own personal life. So it was with Jesus Christ. And it was that social evil round about Him that sent Him from time to time away into silence and solitude. The quiet waters and the green pastures of daily devotion were not always enough. Now and then His mighty spirit, like a great mountain bird, must make for the open sea.

It is doubtful if His disciples would have gone with Him into retreat, if He had not taken them with Him. But the need may be present while the desire is absent, and so He took them with Him. This brings us to see where the spiritual genius of Ignatius Loyola emerged. There was nothing new in the idea of making a retreat, nor was he the first to compose a manual of Spiritual Exercises.

But he had towards the souls of men this divine shepherd-instinct, or if you prefer another way of putting it, he was a great spiritual democrat. He wished to present to those souls whose spiritual desire was less than his own, but whose spiritual need was equally great, the use of this marvellous talisman which he had, after long and careful searching, discovered. Francis Xavier was one of the very earliest to receive those Spiritual Exercises. That fact alone would give some consideration of them a place in this work. But there is another fact which still further excites our interest in these Exercises, the fact that during the last few decades there has been a great movement going on throughout Europe—in abeyance during the war and now once more active—known to-day as the Retreat Movement. What is this long gold chain of prayer and meditation at whose farther end we can see Peter Faber and Francis Xavier kneeling together beside Loyola, and whose nearer end has now spread out like the branches of some vast tree over all Christendom ?

" Most of us," says Lainez, the second general, " received with the Exercises the spirit of vocation, so much so that we might truly say that our Society has been founded and united and developed chiefly by their means." To all who wished to join the Company, Ignatius administered this discipline ; it was given as well to hundreds who found themselves at the cross-roads, and such were almost invariably in those early days added to the ranks of the Society. Francis of Sales remarked that the little book had converted more souls than the letters it contained, and it has often been said that

the famous meditation of the Two Standards has peopled monasteries. To this day the Jesuits honour the Exercises as a revelation from God, and find in them the apotheosis of the spirit of their Order. They are now yearly administered all over the world, in a more or less modified form, to hundreds of thousands of men and women. Loyola himself had such unbounded faith in this discipline that if ever it failed to produce the desired effect he blamed only the manner of giving or receiving it.

To hear such reports of its fame, and then to turn to the book itself, is inevitably to be disappointed. The first thing which strikes you, especially if you expect to find here a work of devotion, is the dryness and reticence of the book. It is like a school text-book, small, precise, divided into portions and headings. Here is no mystical rapture, no poetic beauty. The personality of the author never appears. Dates, hours, subjects of prayer and meditation, physical environment, a confessor or adviser, all are arranged for, and then the soul is to be left alone with God, until the director again demands its confidence. For between the pupil and the director, who represents the Church, there can be no veil drawn.

Ignatius did not put this book into the hands of Christians that they might keep it on their shelves and read it now and then, at stated intervals, as they would their Bibles or their books of devotion. For the mere reader the book is a closed door, or at best a window through which he may peer uneasily.

The book opens with Twenty Annotations which begin by defining spiritual exercises as "every method of examination of conscience, of meditation,

of contemplation, of vocal and mental prayer, and of other spiritual operations as shall be afterwards declared; for, as to go for a walk or a journey and to run are bodily exercises, so is the name of spiritual exercises applied to any method of preparing and disposing the soul to free itself from all inordinate affections, and after it has freed itself from them, to seek and find the will of God concerning the ordering of life for the salvation of one's soul."

After these annotations come directions for the self-examinations which are to be made thrice daily, and for the four weeks of the Retreat. After retiring, if possible completely, from the outer world, closing doors and windows, the retreatant is to meditate for a week upon sin and punishment, especially in the morning, at noon, in the evening, and at midnight. At the end of the first week he is to make a general confession, and to receive the Holy Sacrament.

The second week, the meditations are taken from events in the life of Jesus, up to the Sunday before His Passion. Amid these meditations is inserted the famous meditation on Two Standards. The one standard is of "Christ, our great Captain, the other of Lucifer, the mortal enemy of the human race." We are "to imagine a vast plain around Jerusalem where the supreme captain-general of the good is Christ, and another plain at Babylon where the chief of the enemy is Lucifer." An elaborate and searching picture of the two leaders follows, with prayers and meditations thereon. There is also in the second week that meditation on the three degrees of humility, which places the first degree

where God's will is man's law, the second where God's will is man's will, and the third where God's will is specially pleasing to man when it involves him in the sufferings and poverty of Christ.

The whole of the third week is occupied with the contemplation of the Passion of our Lord, and the fourth week is taken up with the Resurrection and the *Contemplation for obtaining love.* In this final contemplation the stern reticence of the founder begins at last to break. "For after winter followeth summer, after night the day returneth, after tempest a great calm."

The windows, according to the directions, have been opened, the sunlight streams into the cell, the Lord is risen, the disciple is bidden to "rejoice in the exceeding great joy and gladness of Christ our Lord . . . to bring before the memory and think of things that cause pleasure, cheerfulness and joy, as about Heaven . . . to avail himself of light, the beauties of the season, as in spring and summer of refreshing coolness, and in winter of the sun or a fire." In this joyous mood the following prayer is to be said with great affection, as one who makes an offering: "Take, O Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and all my will, whatever I have and possess. Thou hast given all these things to me: to Thee, O Lord, I restore them all: all are Thine, dispose of them according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and Thy grace, for this is enough for me."

A chapter on Three Methods of Prayer follows, then an annotated summary of the Life of Christ, chiefly in the words of the New Testament, and various "rules," including the much-discussed rules

for thinking with the Church. The knowledge of the inner machinery of the human heart and mind displayed in this book, and especially in these later chapters, is profound.

There must be a deep æsthetic as well as religious delight in shutting oneself within the bare and austere walls of this discipline, and then, after seeing and hearing and feeling the terrors of hell, finding oneself gradually surrounded by all the splendours of this magical architecture; and Francis Xavier, with his native genius for joyfulness, must have benefited to the full by this design of spiritual cunning. But Ignatius never allows the discipline or delights of these exercises to be an end in themselves; his aim is self-discipline, and the discipline of the regiment of Jesus.

Nevertheless the book has been condemned by many able writers on the ground of its "crass materialism." J. A. Symonds, in his *Renaissance in Italy*, says: "Materialism of the crudest type mingled with the indulgence of a reverie in this long spiritual journey. At every step the neophyte employed his five senses in the effort of intellectual realization . . . he has to *see* the boundless flames of hell . . . to *hear* the shrieks and blasphemies, to *smell* the sulphur . . . to *taste* the bitterness of tears."

If this criticism is just, we are forced to ask what is the orthodox state of mind and imagination on reading, say, the last few verses of the 9th chapter of St Mark, or the 25th chapter of St Matthew? It would take a most accomplished theologian to read those words of our Lord without the most vivid and, to use Dr T. M. Lindsay's phrase, "crassly

material" pictures invading his mind. What is the purpose of the Parables, of all imaginative art and literature, if not just to make us see and hear and feel, and thus to swing a bridge between the life of sense and the life of ultimate reality? Through the words and actions of our schoolmasters who bring us to Christ, through the Scriptures, through the material images which the Scriptures conjure up in our minds, through Nature which is the garment of God, through all those "material" ways we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven and of the things unseen.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the little book lies in its confessional quality. Asked how he wrote it, Loyola said, "As through my own experience a thing appeared to me useful to others, I noted it down." This habit he had begun at Manresa in 1522, and the Exercises were not published till 1548. Apart from his own experiences, the literary sources of the book are not numerous. By far the most outstanding influence, after the Bible, is undoubtedly the *Imitation*, and in the letters and writings of St Francis Xavier we can see that he, too, was deeply, probably directly, influenced by Thomas à Kempis.

The only way for Christians outside the Roman communion to read this book (though after all it is not a book to be read, but a set of rules for exercises which are to be done) is for them to substitute for Loyola's conception of the Church their own conception of a Church Catholic whose glory might be identified with the glory of God, and then to give that Church, throughout the book, their full allegiance. For above and beyond everything else, the whole composition is set forth *Ad Majorem Dei*

Gloriam, and the glory of God and of the Roman Catholic Church are for Loyola identical. There is something very beautiful about Loyola's faithfulness to the Church. There was probably no man in Europe who saw her faults more plainly, and yet for the sake of that heavenly ideal of her which was in his heart, and in the hope of happier days to come, this great man was content to lick the dust from off her defiled feet.

As for Francis, he did not even see the dust. The name of reformer sits ill on him, although like the reformers he liked to preach truth "from the sources." But he preached from the sources of inner experience rather than from those of historic fact. To find his followers we must look southwards across the Alps, to the painters of the Italian Renaissance. In this indeed he was one with the reformers: his permanent contribution was one of character rather than of thought, but he has a still deeper affinity with the artists. For his genius, like theirs, was a happy and positive one. He was intoxicated with the beauty of holiness. There is a colour, a tender grace, a naïve childlikeness about his life that we associate with the angels of Fra Angelico or the bright figures of Botticelli. Nothing about Xavier is more elusive than his relations with the Jesuits. He is the Peter Pan of the Company, and peculiarly aloof from the circumstances of his time. Had Ignatius Loyola never come to Paris, it is likely that the "heretics" from whom, Francis afterwards wrote, he had been "delivered" would have annexed him to Protestantism. They, like Loyola, had appealed to him by a great enthusiasm. But Xavier as a Protestant would not have been very different from

Xavier of the Company of the Name of Jesus. The greatest of Loyola's disciples was the least of the Jesuits. At home or abroad, within the Church or without it, Francis, after his conversion, knew nothing but Christ and Him crucified, and could do nothing but preach Him to the Gentiles. Henceforth, that is, after he has made his first retreat and undergone for the first time the long discipline of the Exercises there seems hardly a moment of his experience nor an iota of his knowledge that is not used, in his favourite phrases, "to increase our holy faith," or "to gain much fruit of souls." Henceforth the life of Francis is dominated by the greatest of all passions, the passion for human souls; in him we see that ardour burning with a splendour rare even among the saints. This is his greatest claim to the Company of Jesus, that he spent his life seeking to save those that were lost.

CHAPTER V

A TRAMP ABROAD

These first Jesuits were mirrors reflecting holiness, pure doctrine, a singular prudence and a profound humility.—CERVANTES.

As we have seen, the Company of Jesus had as yet no formal existence, but during the year which followed the solemn day of consecration on Montmartre Ignatius and his disciples were constantly together. They supped in one another's rooms, compared college notes, and discussed and prayed over plans for the future. Once a week they confessed and communicated. Peaceful hours they passed with one another, "the future all unknown," waiting together to hear the will of God. It has been well said that the two most vital elements of the Christian Church are faith and fellowship. And apart from each other these two are imperfect, for the solitary man of faith, if he is not a pioneer, is a deserter, and there is no real fellowship save in a common faith. But here, in this early companionship of the Jesuits, we are not surprised to find ourselves at the source of a very great movement, for here we find faith and fellowship in serene and joyful union. It was during those months that Francis Xavier sealed the strongest and tenderest friendships of his life. The expression of this great affection for the fellow-members of his company, and, above all, for Ignatius,

runs like a thread of gold through his letters from the East.

Meanwhile the little coterie began to attract the attention of the watch-dogs at the Sorbonne. These constant meetings, these devotions, these enthusiasms looked like heresy, looked like Lutheranism. Anyhow, it was all so unconventional that Ignatius was censured and warned. The authorities may possibly have the more easily made this mistake owing to the fact that Francis Xavier had undoubtedly, not long before this time, been associating with the Lutherans, "bad companions, whom I in my inexperience did not recognize," he calls them in his first extant letter written in March 1535 to his brother in Spain. One Jean Calvin, he might have added, was the ringleader of those wicked persons. These sentences from the letter to his brother are very revealing. "And now," he proceeds, "that these heresies are exposed, I should not wish to have been associated with them for anything in the world. I do not know when I shall be able to pay Señor Maestro Iñigo, that he brought to an end my conversation and intercourse with persons who outwardly appeared to be good, but within were full of heresies, as has now been shown."

Here we see a young man, *anima naturaliter Christiana*, happy in the company of those young Lutherans, because they were talking about Jesus Christ, happy with Loyola and his companions, because they too talked about Him. If Calvin and his friends were otherwise engaged, he went to Loyola's rooms; if Loyola was away, he went to Calvin. Sometimes Calvin got very theological, and that was dull; sometimes Loyola got over-subtle and

too psychological, and he gave it up and let his thoughts wander back to the old days at Xavier. On the whole he was more at home in the Company of Jesus. Perhaps Calvin and his friends found him a little too aristocratic, a little too simple. Ultimately it was to Loyola that he gave his confidence. And he did not in the least distrust the queer, compelling, psychic authority of "The Master." We gaze perhaps in some bewilderment at the spectacle of so outstanding a youth—at least a youth who was to become so outstanding a man—being quite content, at the end of a long and distinguished college career, at the end of a long period of residence as a theological student in Paris during the most exciting years of the Reformation, to speak of his withdrawal from the Protestant reformers as "my withdrawal from bad companions whom I in my *inexperience* did not recognize." How are we to explain it ?

It was the call of the more compelling factor in his soul. All his youth had been steeped in the thought of loyalty to the Church. And now in his days of youthful awakening he had caught the glimmering of a new light, loyalty to the truth, which is the higher loyalty because it is loyalty to loyalty itself. But the call of the Church, reinforced by the dark electric forces which flowed from Loyola, wooed him back, happy in his "inexperience," to the maternal breast of Rome. Yet, if his loyalties were personal rather than absolute, we cannot forget that one of these persons was Jesus Christ. And if that involved him in any inconsistencies, he simply did not see them. Had he been confronted by all the knaves of Europe in a body, he would, with that glowing

and smiling countenance which the old biographers love to speak of, have rendered thanks for so great an opportunity, and instantly begun preaching to them what he always called "the Law of Christ our Lord."

From the same letter which we have already quoted, we gather that Francis was at this time living in extreme poverty. Rather shyly and obscurely he refers to his empty pockets, "yet," he writes courteously to his brother, "this lack is only because you do not really know about my hardships, and I suffer them all in the very certain hope that when you know assuredly about them your great liberality will end my miseries." We have seen from the account of student life in Paris in those days how real and terrible the miseries were. It is most likely that Francis over-estimated his brother's financial resources at this time. Whether the Captain of Azpilcueta helped him or not, we do not know. But we know that in the same year, and almost at the hour of his departure for Venice, Francis got the news that he was to be given a canon's chair in the cathedral of Pampeluna. This was no greater an honour than a man of his family and attainments might expect as a matter of course, but it must have summed up for him the things which he was leaving behind him as he passed through the gates of Paris for the last time.

What was he leaving behind him? Twelve years of college life—of a kind of college life of which Montaigne and Rabelais and Erasmus have left such pitiful and burning records. He had in turn starved, caroused, fasted, frozen. He had studied, talked, quarrelled and made friends in at least five different

languages—Latin, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Basque. He was, according to the standards of the Church, a cultured philosopher and an expert theologian. The constant perils of cold and pestilence, of rope and faggot, had left him unharmed. But, above all, it was here that Ignatius had led him to the new life. No wonder that those old streets and colleges haunted his imagination throughout the remaining sixteen years of his life. It was for Paris, more than for the high plains of Navarre, that he longed in exile. And it was to Paris that he would fain have returned and " gone shouting up and down the streets like a madman," telling the students to give up their small ambitions and come eastward to preach the Gospel of Christ.

Old Tursellinus' chapter on the journey from Paris to Venice is typical and quaint, and gives as good a picture as exists of that hard journey. This Life was first published in Latin in 1546, but I quote from the English version of 1632.

" He had now almost finished his course of Divinity, when presently he was to depart for Italy. For the Fathers had agreed among themselves that upon a set day, to wit the 24th of January 1537, they would all meet together at Venice with St Ignatius. . . . Therefore upon the 13th day of November, a most unseasonable time of the year, having according to their vows given all they had to the poor, except their writings and some little thing to help them on the journey, he, together with his other company, setteth forth on the way. Their manner of travelling was this : they were clothed in coarse and old habits, everyone with a staff in his hand, and a short

leather mantle upon his shoulders like poor pilgrims ; about their necks they hung their beads to be known for Catholics as they travelled among heretics, their writings they carried at their back in a little bag.

" They used every day to communicate, being the only comfort of all their labours, thereby both to renew their forces and to revive their spirits, being wearied with painful travail. When they departed from their lodging they always commended themselves to God, and when they came into it they gave Him thanks. Being upon the way, they first spent some time meditating upon heavenly matters : then they used some pious discourse together, and then they lightened the labour and weariness of their journey with singing of hymns, psalms and spiritual canticles.

" In this manner, for the most part taking his way through Lorraine and Germany, to avoid the troubles of the war, he endured the autumn showers of France and the winter colds of Germany, and though he were not accustomed to travel on foot, yet he cheerfully undertook this long and tedious journey . . . through most foul ways encumbered over with snow and frozen up with ice, especially as he passed the Alps. . . . And Francis throughout the whole journey (as he was always wont to do) applied himself with such diligence and alacrity in helping and serving his companions as was wonderful. . . . Francis therefore, by the aid both of Heaven and earth, having waded through all the incommodities and dangers of the way, upon the 10th of January of the year following, arrived safe with his companions at Venice."

Their leader had arrived almost a year before them. He had passed the time between the study of theology, the care of the sick and destitute, and the administration of the Spiritual Exercises. The members of this long-planned conference found a very different programme awaiting them from that which is put into the hands of the twentieth-century patron of congresses. Exhausted with the cold and hardships of the journey, they were immediately divided into two groups: one group went with Ignatius to work in the hospital of St John and St Paul; the other, which included Xavier, went to serve the incurables. And there indeed the bread was bitter and the stairs were steep. The story of how Francis inured himself to the sights and smells which he could hardly bear reminds us of how Goethe, by walking in the Strasburg churchyard at midnight, rid himself of fear, and by standing on the pinnacle of the cathedral cured himself of giddiness. And the saint was no less successful than the poet.

It is in Venice that we first hear of Xavier preaching the Gospel. His Italian was uncertain, but he talked boldly, catechised, and while he nursed the sick, he read and prayed with them. "You would have thought," says Tursellinus, "that he had seen Christ with his eyes in those poor sick persons, and employed all his labours in serving Him."

There was no city in Europe more fitted than Venice to be the theatre for the early and heroic enthusiasms of the Jesuits. It was at the same time the city of refuge and the hospital of northern Italy. Rome was sacked, the patriots of Florence

exiled, Milan little else than an army. Venice, insulated, apart, became a spot where men retired; from whence they gained, as it were, a bird's-eye view of the turbulent arena of their life. There serious thought became common, and religious enthusiasm inevitably followed. And there, as here, none had to look far in order to see Christ sick and naked and in prison. The story of the foundation of the Somascenes is a typical example of this revival.

"A Venetian senator, Girolamo Miani, gathered together the children who were fugitives in Venice, and received them into his house, seeking them out through the islands and the city. Without paying much heed to the scoldings of his sister-in-law, he sold his plate, and the handsomest tapestry in his house, to procure for the children lodging, food, raiment, and instructions. By degrees he devoted his whole energy to this vocation. His success was particularly great in Bergamo. The hospital which he founded there was so strenuously supported, that he was encouraged to make similar experiments in other towns."

Xavier's headquarters in Venice, the Incurable Hospital, was founded in 1523. Next to the Jesuits themselves, the Theatines were the most important of the non-monastic orders which are so characteristic a feature of this period. The founders of this Order, Cardinal Caraffa and Gaetano da Tiene, were members of the Oratory of Divine Love. This was an association of about fifty pious and cultured Italians, who had been united by the earnest desire to bring about a reform in the Church by personal

piety and intellectual earnestness. Gaetano himself, one gathers, was of a timid and sentimental disposition, one of those who believe in being "good to the poor" and living a holy life, in order that they may beautify and save their own souls. Added to this was an extreme modesty. It was said of him that he would "like to reform the world without his own existence being known." Caraffa, afterwards Pope Paul IV, was of a very different mould —active, violent, business-like, "a builder and a destroyer." But the stormy soul of the future Pope saw as clearly as the contemplative Gaetano that his only peace lay in submission to God and in a life of communion with Him. So these two members of the Oratory of Divine Love united in founding an institution whose members were to cultivate prayer and contemplation, and at the same time to return to the old Apostolic ideals of preaching the Gospel and ministering to the sick and the unhappy.

It was with these men that Loyola associated in Venice, and it was in their convent that he awaited the coming of his disciples. Scarcely had Xavier and his brother pilgrims recovered from the hardships of their fifty days' march across the Alps, when they had again to take to the road. This time Rome was the goal. Ignatius divided them into three bands and sent them southward to get the Papal permission to preach in the Holy Land, and to make arrangements for their ordination. He himself remained in Venice. The accounts of this expedition are, as far as outward circumstances go, lugubrious in the extreme. It was Lent, "a very incommodious time for religious men to travel

in." They fasted rigorously and ate only what the chances of begging put in their satchels. They had neither horse nor ass. Often they spent the night with the cattle, and if they did find other shelter, the beds were such that it took more courage to lie down in them than to share the rush floors with the rats. I think it must be Francis whom Rodriguez, who was with them, describes as "one in the market-place, barefooted, his gown kilted up to the knee, asking the merchants for a little fruit, or a vegetable, and taking it with great humility." "And then," Rodriguez goes on, "I compared the poverty of this abasement of my companion with his great learning, his talent and deep wisdom, and all those qualities which might have made for him, had he chosen it, earthly fame, and I felt moved beyond all expression."

But Francis seems to have shown no sentiments of self-pity. In the midst of all these privations, we read, his soul overflowed with joy. The spirits of the companions were so high, Father Brandao writes, that they could take but little sleep. At last they reached the Vatican and found themselves, in the presence of the Pope, arguing with the Papal theologians, in order to prove their ability to preach the Gospel. All went well; they were permitted to go abroad. In May they were once more with Ignatius in Venice, and on 24th June 1537 Francis was ordained. Immediately afterwards he retreated, along with Salmeron, to Monselice, a quiet spot at the foot of the Euganean Hills between Padua and Rovigo. There they found a deserted, roofless cottage, which they thatched themselves and made "a little sorry habitation." In this still place

they passed forty days in prayer and serious thought. Then, as their leader had not yet recalled them, they went out into the villages preaching and teaching.

"And this," says Tursellinus, "was Francis' manner of preaching: remembering that Christ was wont to preach in the fields, upon mountains and on the sea-shores, whenever he saw any hope of doing good, there he would put himself among assemblies of people to preach, and especially would he teach such as never used to come to sermons . . . gathering together people in the cross-ways and the streets, and borrowing a stool out of some shop, standing thereon he would speak of virtuous and godly life with more fervour of spirit than flourish of word." Again Tursellinus says that those who came to laugh went away weeping, moved by the divine force wherewith he spoke. From one source and another we have a clear impression of Francis' preaching and teaching being at the same time intensely moving and compelling, and quite without any ordinary eloquence or fluency.

The proposed mission to the Holy Land was, so far, impossible. Venice and Turkey were still at war, the Sultan's ships blocked the Adriatic, peaceful transit was out of the question. But wherever Francis Xavier found himself, he found also souls to be saved.

In the autumn Ignatius recalled the Company to Vicenza. They found their leader in a half-ruined and deserted convent, doorless, windowless, unfurnished. There they ate and slept and prayed, and they took their recreation among the poor and sick and ignorant folk in the town. It was here

that Xavier offered his first Mass. "To look upon him," they said, "one would have thought, not only that he believed, but that he saw with his eyes that which is hidden in this most holy mystery." Nor did he ever lose this fresh ardour. It was "as if coming every day like a new priest to the altar, he had tasted the first sweetness of those sacred mysteries."

About this time Francis was seized with one of those violent attacks of fever to which he was liable, and to which he probably in some measure owed his early death. When he had recovered he found all hope of an expedition to the Holy Land finally abandoned. Ignatius was about to go to Rome with Peter Faber and Lainez, and the others were told off in couples and sent out on preaching tours to the university towns of northern Italy; Xavier and Bobadilla were to go to Bologna.

They began now to ask what they should call themselves. "They prayed about it," one of them writes, "and remembered that they knew no name but Jesus Christ, and that they served Him alone. And so it appeared to them they might take the name of their Leader, and that they should call themselves the Company of Jesus."

In October 1537 Francis arrived in Bologna. His first act was to visit the tomb of St Dominic, for he had a great admiration for the founder of the Preaching Friars. Possibly he knew more about Dominic than to-day is really known. Both were Spaniards, and in both are to be found the same qualities of military pride, of religious enthusiasm, of half-oriental passion and mysticism. Like Xavier, Dominic combined intense sensitiveness of

character and tenderness towards individuals with a fiery ardour for the Faith which sometimes tolerated religious cruelty, while holding aloof from any personal share in it. Like Xavier, he was a lover of poverty, but that was not for either of them the central passion of life. That passion, for them both, was to teach and to convert.

There, in Bologna, a canon of the cathedral offered Francis hospitality. He accepted a room, but desired to beg his bread each day. After early Mass he went to the hospital and prison, and later on he ran through the streets waving his hat in the air and crying, "Come and hear the Word of God!" Then he would get a chair and mount up and preach in a jargon composed of several languages, because he did not know much Italian. The canon with whom he lodged said: "He spoke little, but his words had a marvellous effect. In his sermons, such was his ardour that it quickly communicated itself to his audience."

In Bologna he was again stricken down with a violent fever, but he allowed himself little rest. Before the ague had left him he was out again in the squares and arcades calling to the students and townsfolk to come and hear the Word of the Lord. Then he and his companion Bobadilla made a rule that each week one obeyed the other. He whose turn it was to obey called the people in the street together, and got ready the bench and put it in the middle of the square, and the other mounted up and preached the sermon. One old chronicler says that "the concourse of people who gathered to the sermon on account of this novelty was great, great the fruit the Lord made by them, great the alms

offered them." But Francis did not accept alms: and so "they could not but think that he sought the salvation of others more than his own commodity."

In March 1538 the Company met together again in Rome. Francis' friends were horrified by his appearance. "He seemed to me," says Rodriguez, "more like a corpse than a living man, he was so pale and thin and disfigured by his long privations and illnesses. When I saw him so unlike himself, so scarred and sorry and worn-out a figure, I could not help feeling that he would never again regain his old strength, and that his working days were at an end." Apparently he gave up active work for some little time, but in his weakness there came to him "visions and revelations of the Lord." In remote regions of his soul he now heard the call from the East.

Even in Bologna he had spoken of India to his friends. And one night in Rome Rodriguez, who was sleeping in the same room, was awakened by hearing his companion call out in his sleep, "More, more, more!" Afterwards, just before he embarked for India, he said to Rodriguez: "You remember, my brother Simon, how one night in the hospital at Rome I woke you with my repeated cries, More, more, more? You asked me at the time what it was, and I said it was nothing. But I will tell you now that I had seen myself in great labour and peril for the service of God, and at the same time His grace sustained me so marvellously that I could not help calling out for more to do."

But now Ignatius and his disciples thought the time had come for the definite and official formation of the Order. "They unanimously decided," says

Polanco, "to give themselves up to prayer, to offer the holy Mass, and each to devote himself specially to serious thought on the subject, in order the better to know God's will for them." These evening and midnight conferences, in the little room in the Piazza Margana in Rome, lasted for three months. Every question as it came under review was submitted to three stages—study, discussion, vote. For the first stage each man went apart alone, and prayed and thought over the matter in silence; secondly, they had an open debate; and lastly, the question was put to the vote.

The first subject on the agenda was one which intimately concerned Xavier's future work. Were those of the Company who might be sent to the Far East to be bound by the same discipline as those at home? There was a long discussion; some of them thought these men should be more or less free and independent. But it was finally decided that if it pleased God and the Pope, the bond should be equally close, however far apart the brothers might be.

Secondly, it was debated as to whether the vows of obedience should be added to the vows of poverty and chastity. We have no record of what Francis said, but probably the construction of an outward rule on this matter was of little concern to him. He was theirs "in Christ," as he used to sign his letters. And he meant what he said, and it was quite true. He was theirs in Christ, and so he was able to transcend all rules and break no laws. Here the man of moral genius stands on the same ground as the great artist. And thus, though Francis Xavier was one of the original Jesuits, we can fancy that he looked

upon that dread master-word of the Constitutions with something of a child-like innocence. He did see Christ in Loyola and in the others, and if their orders were not always compatible with the Divine Voice within, he still, with dreamy eyes, saw Christ in them and obeyed that inner Voice.

At last the Constitutions were drawn up, and in June 1539 were presented to Pope Paul III. He is said to have exclaimed on reading the document, *Hic est digitus Dei !* And when we recall the position of the Papacy at this time, his exclamation of joy does not surprise us. Protestantism was spreading over Europe with inexorable rapidity. The faithful Catholics were openly hostile to the Papal See and its abuses. "From the Papal point of view the situation seemed truly desperate. And just at this point came a troop of men, ardent, belligerent, devout, offering a blind obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff, and ready to fight to the death for his greatness and his authority." [1]

For the student of the life of Francis Xavier the Bull consenting to the official formation of the Company of Jesus has a peculiar interest. For it contains the nucleus of the famous Constitutions of the Order, and this nucleus is all of these Constitutions that Xavier ever possessed, and was the only Rule which he had with him in India. They were not completed until many years later, nor were they put into the hands of members of the Society till 1553, a year after Xavier's death. The revised edition, with large additions and introduction by Lainez, was not published till 1558, after the death of Loyola himself. So the Constitutions as they

[1] M. Philipsson, *La Contre-Révolution réligieuse du* 16e *siècle*, p. 55.

now stand have little to do with Xavier, but the version of them contained in this Bull, *Regimini Militantis Ecclesiæ*, was the fruit, in part at least, of his own mind and soul. The later edition is a very different, and a much less beautiful, affair. Certainly, we do see in this document the germs of the later Constitutions, the beginnings of distrust of the free exercise of personal judgment. The fresh vigour of Francis Xavier was, however, proof against this comparatively mild edition of the Constitutions. And the fact that they were partly of his own devising made the yoke easy to him. Further, the initiators of the Order possessed high gifts of individuality and independence, and these qualities saved their obedience from servility. Ignatius, with all his astuteness, never perhaps foresaw that the Rules, which were good for those whose whole natures had had free exercise on the making of them, might not be good for those who had merely to step into the machine. For the value of the conception lay, not so much in the special form which it had taken, as in the fact that it was original, and had been beaten out with the hammer of sincere self-expression.

Yet we must not forget that the idea of unswerving obedience to a superior was not peculiar to the Jesuits, although the fact that this was, above all things, a military order, means that it laid a very special emphasis upon that virtue. "I do not consider myself," says Loyola, "to have quitted military service, but only to have transferred it to God." St Basil had told his monks to be in the hands of the superior as an axe in the hands of the butcher. The monks of the Chartreuse were to give up their

wills as sheep led to the slaughter. For the Carmelite disobedience was a mortal sin. St Francis of Assisi and Bonaventura both compare the obedient man to a corpse. And Ignatius borrowed this figure from them when he wrote, some years later, the often quoted words: "Let everyone be persuaded that those who live under obedience are obliged to allow themselves to be moved and directed by the divine providence through their superiors as if they were a corpse, which allows itself to be carried about at will, and to be treated it matters not how; or like an old man's staff, which serves him who holds it, in every place and in every way as he will."

The formal proclamation of the Bull did not take place till September 1540, more than six months after Francis had left Rome. But on 3rd September 1539 the Pope gave his oral approbation, and within a few weeks the Jesuits were preaching all over Italy under his orders.

A close correspondence was kept up between Loyola and his followers. He required them to send him full details of all their work, and he on his side sent them constant advice and encouragement. During this autumn and winter of 1539-1540 Francis was kept at Loyola's side as his private secretary.

Meanwhile Principal Gouvea, of the College of St Barbe, had not lost sight of his former students. His interest in missionary work in India was unabated, and he had at this time under his care a number of Portuguese students holding special bursaries in order to enable them to qualify as missionaries. And now he wrote to Ignatius,

asking him if he and his Company would accept a mission to India, if it were offered to them by the King of Portugal. Faber replied in the name of the Company, explaining that they were willing to go, as far as they themselves could say, but that all depended upon the will of the Pope. "If he send us, we go rejoicing . . . the distances which separate us from India and the difficulty of learning their language would not daunt us. To do anything which will help Jesus Christ, that is our business. Pray to Him then that He may make us His ministers to preach the Word of Life, so that we may not be self-sufficient as if sufficient of ourselves, for our hope is in His abundance and His riches."

And then this simple and beautiful soul goes on to give his own particular expression to sentiments which were at this time so widespread within the Roman Church as to constitute a movement second only in importance to the Reformation itself. "There are many people," he writes, "even in Rome, who hate the truth and the enlightenment of the Church. It is for you then to watch, and to send out into the world Christian men, who, by the example of a holy life, as well as by the other means which you have put at their disposal for the defence of the faith and of sound doctrine, may instruct Christian people, for how are we to believe that God will keep us in the integrity of the faith if we neglect a holy life? There is good reason to believe that the chief errors of doctrine proceed from evil lives, and that the former can do no harm if the latter is corrected."

The letter was forwarded by Gouvea to the King, who then wrote to his ambassador at the papal

court, asking him to make private enquiries about the characters and qualifications of these young men, and, if the results were satisfactory, to ask the Pope to allow some of them to go to India.

The ambassador made his enquiries, and was well satisfied. They said they would willingly go wherever the Pope should send them. The Pope replied that such a long and dangerous voyage ought only to be undertaken voluntarily; he would command none of them, but if any of them decided to go, he would give them his blessing.

Then a difficulty arose. Although Ignatius could say that all of the Company were ready to go if called upon, most of them were at the moment engaged elsewhere. King John wished four men, but out of the twenty members who now composed the Society, only two, besides Ignatius, were then in Rome—Francis Xavier and Salmeron. Salmeron was destined for Ireland, and Francis appears at first to have been put on one side, why, we can only guess. Probably his shattered constitution had not yet recovered; probably, also, Loyola was loth to lose his secretary and one of his best-loved disciples. It was impossible to find four men, but Loyola promised that he would find two, and the Pope then gave formal command that two should go. Rodriguez was the first to be chosen, and was sent from Rome to Lisbon by boat, as he was not well enough to travel overland. Bobadilla was then sent for, but when he arrived in Rome he was so ill that for him India was out of the question.

The time passed, and no one was found. At last there were only twenty-four hours left before the date fixed for the ambassador's return to Portugal,

and Ignatius had promised that one of the Company would go with him, *en route* for India.

Francis had not hidden his desires from the master. He could say no more, Loyola must decide.

"All at once," Rodriguez tells us, "Ignatius, who was ill in bed, called Father Francis Xavier and said to him, 'Master Francis, you know how, by order of his Holiness, two of us must go to India, and that we had chosen Master Bobadilla for this mission, and now because of his illness he cannot go. The ambassador cannot wait till he is better. There now is something for you!' And at once the blessed Father Francis, with great joy and promptitude, replied, 'Well then, forward! Here I am!'"

There was no time for elaborate preparations or for long-drawn-out farewells. Next morning the traveller must leave Rome. His kit was simple; he rolled up three or four well-worn garments, and put them in his little bag, then he put in two books, and that was all. One of these books was his breviary, the other may still be seen in a convent in Madrid, and is largely composed of extracts from the New Testament. You will look in vain for any underlinings or marginal notes, for before he left Europe Francis seems to have learned the rule of the Order that there was to be no marking of books.

On the day of his departure from Rome he wrote three memoranda, and left them in charge of the brethren there. In the first he declares his obedience to all the rules and constitutions of the Company, both as then existing, and as they might afterwards be altered. The second declares that he would give

his vote for Loyola when the time came to elect a Superior in the Company, to "our old and true Father Don Ignatio, who brought us all together with so much labour, and who, still not without labour, knows best how to keep us, rule us, and lead us on to better things, for he knows us all." The third memorandum promises perpetual obedience, poverty, and chastity, against the date when the Superior shall be chosen, and the others renew their vows.

Nothing now remained to do but to go to the Vatican to receive the papal blessing, and to bid his friends, and above all, Loyola, a long farewell. These two were never to meet again. Of that hour we have no record, but he may well have been thinking of this moment when years afterwards, in commenting on the sentence, "*Qui voluerit animam suam salvam facere, perdet eam*," he wrote, "It may be easy to understand the Latin, and the general meaning of this saying of the Lord, but when dangers arise, when the life about which you wish to decide will probably be lost, and when, in order to prepare yourself to decide to lose your life for God's sake in order that you may find it in Him, you get down to details, everything else, even this clear Latin, begins to get hazy. And in such a case, however learned you may be, you can understand nothing, unless God, in His infinite mercy, makes your particular case plain."

He had entered the capital in complete poverty, but now, though against his will, he had to keep state with the ambassador in whose train he travelled. But even thus he found ample occasion for service. "When he came to the inn he would leave the best

chambers and beds to others of his company, and when the servants neglected to look after their masters' horses, or discharge other inferior servile offices, he would himself do them all." And when he talked seriously of religious matters, as he often did, with his companions, "he always allayed the wholesome bitterness of these discourses with the sweet sauce of many courteous offices."

By way of Loretto they went to Bologna, where Francis had preached two years earlier. From there he wrote to Ignatius, "On Easter Day I got some letters from you with a mail which came for the Lord Ambassador. And since only by letters I suppose that we shall see each other in this life, and in the other face to face, with many an embrace, then, in this little time left us of this life, let us see each other by frequent letters." In the same letter he writes, "The Lord Ambassador made me so many presents that I could not come to an end of writing them. I do not know how I could stand them if I did not think and hold almost for certain that in India they may have to be paid for with no less than life."

From Bologna they went on by Modena and Reggio to Parma. There Francis had planned to meet his beloved Peter Faber, whom he had seen so much of in his college days, but they missed one another by a few hours, and they never saw one another again.

In an old MS. there is an account given by a fellow-traveller of his conversion by Francis during this journey. "I was an *hidalgo*, young and rich, and I was out to see the world. . . . I had many things on my conscience, as often happens when a

rich youth roams at large in strange countries. On the way I made the acquaintance of Master Francis, and he showed great kindness to me. He sought out my company, and warmed my heart by his honest gaiety, as side by side we travelled onwards. Gradually he came to speak of general confession, and persuaded me to make it. I made it to Francis himself. From that time I became, thanks to God, another man. It is true that Master Francis had a notable gift for impressing the fear of God on men's souls: I felt this fear grow within me even while I confessed. It was then, for the first time in my life, that I understood what it was to be a Christian."

After crossing the Alps the travellers went through the south of France, and thence up one of the northern passes of the Pyrenees.

Some of the old biographers tell an elaborate and pathetic tale of how the Company passed close to the castle of Xavier, and how the ambassador asked Francis to go and bid farewell to his mother. The saint, these old biographers relate, refused to do so, and they are thus provided with a rapturous passage on his other-worldliness. But his mother had been dead since 1529, and the old home was long since broken up.

Nevertheless the folk of these parts still show the spot where Francis, they say, paused to look down upon the scenes of his early youth, and to say good-bye to his old home. And they have given to that place the name of the Farewell Rock, *la Peña del Adios.*

Nothing indeed can be more likely—though the sensational tale of the biographers is disproved—

than that on one of these lonely heights above the ancestral keep the worn-out youth, clad in a battered cloak which contrasted quaintly with his handsome mount, drew in the reins, and allowed his eyes to linger for a little while on those walls which had once held all that was most dear and sacred, whispering, as he turned away, tender adieux.

CHAPTER VI

THE MONTHS IN LISBON AND THE VOYAGE TO INDIA

I will go anywhere, provided it be forward.—David Livingstone.

It has often been said that the early thirties are critical years of life. If a sensitive man reaches that age without having chosen his path, he is, indeed, apt to find himself in a mental and spiritual maelstrom. But Francis Xavier came to Lisbon serene and joyful, and the whole town seems to have been astonished and captivated by the spectacle of one whose life not only recalled the meekness and poverty of Jesus, but also reflected something at least of an aspect of Him which was still dearer to the Iberian temperament, His authority and princeliness. And it is not to be wondered at that those who saw him marvelled. For Francis was experiencing in those months the pristine ecstasy of the spiritual marriage; in Paris he had been wooed, and had responded to the call, and made his solemn promises, but now at last all preparations were completed, and the old life left behind, and now he was dead to all save his life in Christ, and the preaching of the Gospel.

In his letters of this time there is no trace of any regret, no wistful turning towards the glories he had renounced; though there is a blending, to English eyes most strange, of rapturous love of Jesus and

serpentine cunning, of evangelical ardour and suave urbanity that perhaps none but a Spaniard could in himself contain.

His inward joy must already have been very real, and the new life very satisfying. For in those wild spring months on that lovely Portuguese coast, in the dazzling and seductive atmosphere of the Court, where he was soon *persona grata*, there must have been much to lure and disturb a heart not firmly fixed elsewhere. And there, too, he would learn, probably for the first time, from the seafaring folk about the harbour and the travellers at the Court, of the terrible dangers of a voyage to India. Only a small proportion of the ships ever returned to port. And on every ship, and in every eastern town, disease took heavy toll of those who escaped shipwreck. But Francis took no account of these things, for his treasure was in heaven, and on earth he had nothing to lose.

Portugal was then at the height of her brief day. She had drunk of the mysterious and reviving wine of the Renaissance, and her renewed vigour had found outlet—shut off as she was by Spain from the rest of Europe—in the only way which was left to her. The sea was her open door. Other lands were giving the world reformers, artists, poets, scholars; her greatest gifts were Bartholomew Diaz and Vasco da Gama and the Navigator Prince. But her glory did not last long. The best of her population was pouring out east and west to the new colonies, and comparatively few ever came back. If the children of the emigrants returned they were often half-caste and of low moral and physical stamina. Then the Inquisition was doing its deadly work, and the fine

Jewish population had been sent out of the country. And the best men among those who were left at home devoted themselves to the Church rather than to their country, with a blind devotion which did Portugal small service.

From the first moment of his arrival in Lisbon Francis plunged into work. A smaller man would complacently have viewed the sacrifice he was about to make of himself, and would have taken a good holiday before embarking. Not so Francis. He was already on active service, and henceforth always would be, so long as there was within a day's journey of him one soul who did not know Christ Jesus. For he was, above all things, an evangelist. But although he had little care for ecclesiastical concerns, and spent small time on theology, he was, like most great evangelists, an uncompromising dogmatist. His evangelical genius taught him that if a man is to preach at all he must preach passionately—nay, aggressively. We cannot by any means always agree with his opinions about the Nature of God, but neither can we quench our admiration for the impatience with which he bids his converts repeat the *Credo* and be baptized and proceed to more practical business. There is evidence that he left Lisbon a better city than he found it.

Simon Rodriguez, who had gone up with him to Montmartre, was there to welcome him. Old biographers weave a miracle from the story of their meeting, but Francis' own words throw light on many miracles. "On the day I got to Lisbon," he says, "I found Master Simon just coming under a fit of ague. My coming was such a joy to him, and seeing him such a joy to me, that the two joys added

together expelled the fever. That is a month ago, and it has not come back since. He is very well and gaining much fruit." In the same letter he discusses the possible "harvest of souls" which he and his friends may hope to make in India. "Those who have been in India for many years," he writes, "tell us that if we maintain there our present remoteness from any kind of avarice in our way of living, they have no doubt but that in a few years we shall convert two or three kingdoms of idolaters to the faith of Christ, when these idolaters recognize in us that we seek nothing else but the salvation of their souls."

Prompted by these sentiments, Francis spent much of his time in Lisbon trying to gather together a small band of men who would accompany him to India as missionaries. Several fellows promised to go, including a medical doctor he had known in Paris, who was to "use his art," as Xavier says, "only in order to help him to save souls."

Meanwhile he gave the Exercises and preached in the churches, by the special request of the King, and began to make plans for a college. Concerning this last scheme he writes to Loyola: "In the course of time we will not fail to speak to the King about a house for students, and for this we will need to know your intentions as to its style, and as to who should govern it, and the order they ought to have, that they may grow in spirit rather than in learning—so that when we speak to the King we may tell him about the way those who study in our college must live. Of all this write us fully."

But in the same long letter he writes: "We see no difficulty about building a college here, the people

here would be delighted to put us up houses if there were anyone to live in them." These words surely betray some of the disappointment which he already must have felt in the rather rococo piety of the Portuguese Court. While the new Order owed to John III its missions in India, Africa, South America, as well as colleges at home, and while Francis had at first been carried away by this King's full-blown enthusiasms, one could not live long in Lisbon and be ignorant of the gigantic exploitations which were taking place in the new colonies. Francis soon suspected that a bad conscience was, in part at least, the source of King John's devotion, and when this became, in India, quite plain to him, he was at no pains to conceal what he thought.

Meanwhile he was now, as always, equally at home in palace or pot-house, dining with the King, or binding up some wretched outcast's sores. Although they were offered quarters at the Court, he and Rodriguez lodged in the hospital, where they spent much of their time. They began by begging their food in the streets, but this, they found, interfered with their other work and they soon gave it up—save twice a week for humility's sake—and accepted what the King sent. Of these meals, Polanco says in his chronicles, they ate but a small portion, and gave the rest to the patients at the hospital.

At the Court Francis' class for pages and their friends, begun by the special request of the King, did livelier work than perhaps John had intended, for it turned some of the young courtiers into monks and others into missionaries. Just before Francis embarked for India he was to write, "Let me tell you this Court is greatly reformed. So much so

that it is more like a religious house than a Court. It is a matter for praise and thanks to God that so many make their confession and take communion every week without fail . . . if our numbers were doubled, there would still be penitents. We are engaged the whole day and part of the night, and this with the Court alone. . . . we have no time for preaching on account of the number of confessions, as we judge it a better service to our Lord to be taken up with confessing rather than with preaching. There are plenty of preachers in this Court."

At this time there was a great fracas going on between the Vatican and the Portuguese Court as to the conduct of the Inquisition. Francis, instead of entering into the dispute, visited the victims who crowded the prisons, and though he gave them the Exercises for the First Week, which are largely occupied with meditations on sin and hell, he seems to have cheered them greatly.

Amazing spectacle! That Francis, the tender-hearted, the sensitive, the pitiful, should go there day after day, with no word, so far as we know, of protest against the tyrants: how do we account for this? How did he dare to bid the victims think on *their* sins, how did he win their love and gratitude for having done so? How could he bid them rejoice that they were cast into prison. Perhaps because one of the first conditions of the development of genius is specialization, and the genius of Francis had to specialize along its own lines. He had faith in the Church. He was a good Roman Catholic. Therefore, it followed that he believed that there were those who were inspired

by God to arrange ecclesiastical affairs, persecutions and the rest. That was not his affair. His affair was to bring outsiders into the fold, for that he must answer before his Church, and before God, and if the Church called a man a heretic, it was not for him to argue with the Church, but to give the man more light. After all, the kindest and most consistent thing which the Roman Catholic Church can do to heretics, *according to her lights*, is to cleanse them of their heresy. But we can imagine how Francis, when he was brought into contact with these unhappy creatures, would rejoice that he was chosen not to hurt but to heal, not to torture their bodies but to comfort their souls. There is nearly always peace in one's own point of view.

Later on, as we shall see, in India, a very different side of his character appeared. There, emancipated from the immediate authority of the Church, his personal sense of justice and of responsibility for her administration of justice burst forth again and again. And, ironically enough, it was nothing less than his passion for justice which led him near the end to make the fatal mistake of asking for the Inquisition in India.

On 18th March 1541 Xavier wrote two farewell letters to Rome. They are full of the deepest and most touching affection. "There are no letters less literary than Xavier's," one has well said, "yet their intensity, with their eager, simple individuality achieves that reality which, after all, is the aim of literature. He is constantly asking for news. He gives frequent instructions about sending letters, and makes careful plans both as to their being

written and forwarded. He wants to know everything about everyone. It is the personal spiritual news, never literature, that is in his mind."

"The Viceroy," he writes now to Loyola and Corduri, "who goes to India this year is a very fine man.[1] He has a good name in the Court here and is beloved by all in India. He told me the other day that in an island of India [Ceylon ?] where there are no Moors or Jews, but only heathen, we are sure to gain a great harvest, and he sees no difficulty in our making the king of that island and all his kingdom Christian. . . . Tell us what, in your opinion, ought to be our method with the unbelievers. Although experience will teach us partly how we ought to go about it, yet for the rest we hope in God our Lord that it will please His Divine Majesty to make us to know through you the best way to serve Him . . . we pray you, Father, and beseech you again and again in the Lord by that friendship which has so united us in Christ Jesus, write and tell us how you think we ought to proceed . . . again we ask you, have us in your prayers beyond the usual remembrance."

Some of the anti-Papist biographers talk of the gorgeous state in which Xavier departed for the East, and contrast his journey with that of good Protestant missionaries to-day. But the oldest and probably the most authentic account of his send-off tells another tale. "When the time of departure was near, the Count of Castanheira was told by the King to find out from Master Francis the things he would need during the voyage, and procure them

[1] Xavier made a mistake in referring to Sousa as a Viceroy. There was no Viceroy at this time, and Sousa was only a Governor.

for him. All that the Count could do was to get the Father to accept, for himself and his companions, a rug of coarse wool, as a protection against the cold weather at the Cape of Good Hope, and several religious books which were not obtainable in India. He would accept no provisions of food, still less would he accept a servant. "Your position demands it," the Count said to him; "you can't wash your own linen, nor busy yourself over the stock-pot!" To this, with a grave and modest air, Francis made answer, "Sir, this care for an imaginary dignity, this anxiety to fulfil unreal obligations, has put Christianity into the deplorable state in which we now see it. As for me, I mean to wash my own clothes and watch my own soup-pot, and look after other people's as well, and by doing these things I hope I shall not lose any authority."

The departure of the ships for the East was at that time one of the great events of the year in Lisbon. Only a small proportion of those who went away ever returned, but those who did, often came laden with fabulous wealth, and full of wonderful tales of the new lands. Before the travellers embarked they used to meet in the Church of Our Lady of Nazareth, where they were publicly commended to the care of God. And all the year round in the convents near by they chanted the Mass of the Angels for those at sea. The place of embarkation was known as the Place of Tears.

There is a tradition in Lisbon that Francis, before going on board the ship, preached to the crowds that had come to bid him farewell. A movable pulpit, it is said, was brought from an adjoining

monastery and the Place of Tears rang with the cheerful adieux of the most joyful of saints, the gayest of missionaries.

This man was off to preach the Gospel because he could not for an hour keep the good news to himself, nor even to Europe, now that the opportunity had come to go farther afield.

Many missionaries have sober faces, and speak often of taking up the Cross, and setting their faces to go steadfastly towards Jerusalem. Xavier, because One had gone there already, could see no more darkness in that direction, and to him the cross which a human back can bear was so small—that other Cross in view—that he did not talk much of it. Yet, like all the gayest souls, he had known well the taste of tears. From his boyhood on, he had quitted the easier and more obvious battlefields, and sought the harder. He had left the knightly company of his brothers and cousins, and become a poor student in Paris; after eleven years of hard study and teaching, he had found the Church waiting for him with open doors, and the road to fame free before him; but, instead of accepting a canonry, he had gone on foot to Venice, and from that time on to now, and it was to be the same henceforth, his life was one steady crescendo of love and devotion to his neighbour and his God. He was fastidious and sensitive; he spent his spare moments nursing the sick and diseased, and visiting those in prison, and reading to them and praying with them. He was a lover of books and all lovely things, but he had left his *Alma Mater* and what she might still have given him far behind. He was a philosopher, and had "explicated Aristotle publicly, and not

without praise," but all that he had now put by. All the superb possibilities, social, political, ecclesiastical, for which his genius had held the key, he was content to see now hid with Christ in God; hid there too, the still dearer and more intimate treasures of family life and love, which few indeed dare willingly forgo for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake. For a man so eager, so ardent, so miraculously sympathetic and tender as Francis, this last sacrifice, of which he never spoke or wrote, is perhaps the fullest witness of all to the largeness and simplicity of his faith.

The sea route to India had been open to Europeans for less than half a century before Francis sailed for India. The first voyage to the East via the Cape of Good Hope had been made by Vasco da Gama in 1498. That intrepid adventurer struck a bigger blow at Mohammedan power in the East by that one voyage than did many hundreds of missionaries. It was indeed a more effective retaliation against the followers of Islam for their having closed the over-land routes to the Christians than they could possibly have foreseen. Hitherto the Arabs, or Moors as the Portuguese called them, had been practically the sole voyagers across the Indian Ocean, and the very names of the cities of their merchandise, such as Bagdad, Venice, Ormuz, Damascus, still breathe an odour of fabulous splendour and wealth. A curious and interesting characteristic of these sea-traders was that they never made any attempt to colonize on the Indian coasts, as the Portuguese immediately did. Political ambition they had none. Commerce was to them an all-absorbing art, loved for her own sake, or for

the sake of the voluptuous beauty and luxury with which she could surround them.

From the first the Portuguese were unhappy colonizers. They did not know the language and took small pains to learn it. They were tactless and unimaginative in their relations with the Orientals; further, they were determined to oust the Mohammedan traders, and very soon the eastern politeness which had welcomed them so courteously gave place to distrust and dislike.

The second expedition had left Portugal in 1500, a fleet of thirteen ships, of which only six arrived in India. Of these ships five returned home so richly laden that all loss of goods and boats was many times covered.

In 1502 da Gama set out again, and by means of brilliant determination and courage, fortified by the most unscrupulous deeds of injustice and robbery and cruelty, Portuguese power in India established itself all along the western littoral. Impregnable fortresses were built in place after place, churches and monasteries were put up inside the forts, and priests and soldiers were shipped out in the desired proportions.

In 1510 Albuquerque, then Governor of India, had captured the island of Goa, and made it the capital of the new colonies. Under his administration some sort of solid success was more nearly achieved than at any other time. He was followed by a series of far inferior men, and soon the lurid series of episodes—which never really had enough of unity or dignity to merit the title of government—lost even the brilliance and "dash" that, from the first, had taken the place of more enduring qualities.

The self-deception on the part of the Portuguese about the success of their new conquest was on a vast scale. Never were the Cross and the sword more blandly identified than in those days. And if for a moment the clouds of conquest and of battle shifted from the sacred Symbol, the dizenry of ecclesiastical pomp still hid its glory and put its message to shame.

The Popes, in far-off Rome, had the vaguest notion of what was happening. They poured out indulgences and pardons of every variety to those "who went to India, stayed there, returned from there, those who died in fighting there *for the spread of the faith*." Colossal raiding expeditions set out again and again with formal and public episcopal blessing, cheered across the harbour bar by the chanting of choristers and the waving of sacred banners. Indian temples were desecrated and despoiled, and their priests slaughtered in the name of Jesus. Barros, the official Portuguese historian of the period, interprets to the people the teaching of the Church on eastern affairs in the following words: "Certainly there is a common right to all to navigate the seas, and in Europe we acknowledge the rights which others hold against us, but not beyond Europe. So the Portuguese, as lords of the sea, are justified in forcing all Moors and Gentiles to hold passports under pain of confiscation and death. Moors and Gentiles are outside the law of Jesus Christ, which is the true law only broken under damnation to eternal fire. If then the soul be so damned, what right has the flesh to the protection of our laws? It is true, they are reasoning beings, and might if they were spared

be converted, but since they have shown no desires to accept the true faith, we Christians have no duties towards them."

Strange and confusing, indeed, is the tapestry which the historians of that period have woven for us. Da Gama embarks from Lisbon, the crowd shouting, "To what mad enterprises covetousness can lead men!" while King Manuel, with great piety and solemnity, puts a far other interpretation on the "mad enterprise" by placing a banner emblazoned with the Cross in the hands of the great admiral. Then da Gama sallies out from the shadows of his gorgeous banner to torture innocent fisher folk; Albuquerque, the best of all the Portuguese governors, cuts off the noses of Arab women; Almeida, another governor, gratuitously tears out the eyes of a Nair in a mood of suspicion. Sousa secretly rolls barrels of gold out of the temples, sailors fling dead bodies of their captives into the sea, and then watch the shore to extort ransoms from the friends who come to take home the corpses; soldiers kill by torture, or sell into slavery, the prisoners whom they cannot ransom. And again and again those Indians, whom the Portuguese said they were going out to civilize and convert, put their would-be teachers to shame. Malik Aiyaz sought for Don Lourenço's body on the battlefield that he might give it honourable burial, and wrote to Almeida, the governor, that when the enemy was conquered he should be treated as a brother. A poor native tribe, suddenly disturbed in their rustic green by Portuguese slave-hunters, gave their enemies food and drink, and then went off on parole to gather together enough money for their ransoms, and

brought it back at the appointed time as they had promised, when they might easily have escaped. But within a few miles of these gentle folk were others who tortured the hours of darkness with their profane and obscene rites, while by daytime their young men hunted for human heads to offer to the maidens they courted, and their women folk dressed human bodies for the oven; again, beyond the next range of hills, it was a crime to kill a fly. And upon the edge of that vast and chaotic and mysterious continent the Portuguese colonists had settled with about as much disturbance as a few gnats would make upon an elephant's back.

The ship in which Xavier sailed was called the *Santiago*. The immense clumsy vessel, which housed in her dark unhealthy crevices about a thousand souls, had hardly loosed her moorings before Francis had become the minister of all. There were indeed in that motley crowd many to care for and few to care. Most of them were poor, not a few desperate. Many of the travellers went simply because they were unemployed and hungry, and this voyage, thanks to the self-interested generosity of the Portuguese Government, would provide them with maintenance till they were beyond the help of Portugal, and not likely ever to have either health or courage to return. Contrasting with these were the sharpest-witted merchants of the day, or their representatives, and lastly, there were the real simple lovers of adventure for her own wild sake, and with these our Saint had probably more in common than with any of the others. For all saints love the spirit of adventure. Are not they themselves the greatest adventurers of all?

Since Vasco da Gama had embarked in 1497 the conditions of travelling had not much improved, although the expedition had now become an annual one, and consisted always at the start of a goodly number of ships. This little fleet of five was a notably small one. The dangers and discomforts of the expedition were legion. Except for the richer travellers, there were no cabins, no sleeping accommodation, no shelters of any kind at all; and the few cabins which did exist had about as much space and ventilation as coffins. The food was scarce, and soon much of it became bad. The water was scarcer still, and was presently so putrid that one historian tells us it could only be drunk in the dark because of the number of distracting creatures in it. Another writer describes how the passengers put a handkerchief across the mouth before drinking, in order to catch the filth. Disease was, of course, rampant, and there was little provision made for its prevention or cure. There was one official box of medicine which in a few days was empty. Added to their perils and sufferings were the terrors of the uncharted seas. Little was known of the times or regions of storm or calm, and the ships were unfitted to combat even with what was known.

The old chronicler Valignano draws a pitiful picture of the gay and ignorant travellers setting out on this journey, bound to be so terrible even at the best, as if they were going for a day's pleasure trip on the Tagus; their only raiment the shirts on their backs, their luggage just what they carried in their hands—a couple of rolls of bread, a cheese, and perhaps a little marmalade.

Xavier, though a first-class passenger in the suite of the new governor, did not keep to his quarters. Remembering and interpreting in his own matchless way Loyola's counsel to be all things to all men, remembering it so well, doubtless, because the words echoed the deepest counsel of his own heart, he was immediately ship's doctor, steward, nurse, evangelist, playmate, tutor, cook, in swift and bewildering succession. Of course, it took a man of genius to do this as he did it, but the sincerity and unselfishness, nay more, the rapture of personal devotion to Jesus with which this *tour de force* was carried through, earned for him on the spot the title of saint, a title so often acquired only through the gracious, or even flattering, hand of tradition. A ship's boy who was on board afterwards told how this amazing man used to occupy himself in doing all the humblest services possible for the other passengers, how he washed their linen for them, and how he gave up his cabin to one who was sick, and slept himself on the coil of a rope. He appears soon to have become the most popular man on board, and to have had an immense influence on those around him. First and last he was evangelist. "I let things go in at their door, but I take care they come out at mine," he is reported to have said, and as he spoke he may have been recollecting the words of Loyola, "A good hunter of souls ought to pass by many things in silence, as if he did not see them; later, when the will is mastered, he will be able to direct the disciple as he please towards virtue." "Very plain it is," said Francis Thompson, the poet, in his *Life of Loyola*, "where Francis learned his divinely unprincipled sleights, his heavenly

cunning." He played cards with the young rakes on board, and soon became their boon companion, and for the time at least brought them on their knees before the beauty of holiness; and many years later we hear of the hymns still being sung on the Portuguese ships, which Francis had them all singing before they passed Madeira. A curiously modern trait which we discover at this time is his absolute refusal to drink wine. "A priest," he said, "should drink nothing but water; this beverage does not excite evil passions, nor defile speech, nor reveal that which should remain hid."

His place during the journey was at the table of the governor, but he chose rather to eat with the crowd. His portion was sent to him from the high table; he gave away to those who were sick all but the most meagre remnant. He himself became ill, but as old Tursellinus puts it, with premonitory hints of a very modern point of view, "The divine virtue which was in him overcame the weakness of his nature, and his noble and constant courage held in the troublesome vomiting of his stomach." Again this same writer tells how he "dressed their meat, minced it small and fed them with his own hand."

For forty days the fleet was becalmed in tropical waters: it was many years since there had been such a terrible passage. But it is noticeable that Francis, in his letters, does not dwell on the terrors of the voyage, and gives but a brief account of his own doings.

At last the wind rose, and soon in storm and tempest they swept round the Cape. They reached Mozambique on 3rd September, and from there Francis

sent a letter to Loyola. "All of us," he writes, " did everything for the poor, according to our small and feeble capacity, engaging ourselves with temporal things as well as with spiritual. As for the fruit, God knows about that, for He does it all." By " all of us " he means his two companions and himself. For his high hopes of taking out an efficient band of men with him, including a medical missionary, had not been realized. Both of his companions were young and inexperienced ; Camerino was to do good work later, but Mansillas was to prove a broken reed. In the letter just quoted Francis also writes :

" One of the things which gives us much comfort and a very strong hope that God our Lord will favour us is the full knowledge we have of ourselves. We see how we lack all the things needful for the duty of declaring the faith of Jesus Christ : and since what we do is only to serve God our Lord, our hope and confidence keeps growing that He will give us, when the time comes, everything that is necessary for His service and glory, in great abundance. . . .

" During the voyage I preached every Sunday and here in Mozambique as often as I could. . . . I would like much to go on writing, but at present sickness will not allow it. To-day they bled me for the seventh time, and I am middling. Praise God."

The King's ships were that year forced to winter in Mozambique, so late were they of arriving. The place was known in those days as the Portuguese cemetery —a title which tells its own tale.

Just after they had arrived, a young man, one of Xavier's fellow-passengers, suddenly died. Had he known Jesus Christ ? asked Francis. No, he was

told. And those present were astonished at the sight of him completely overcome with sorrow. "But you did not know him," they said. "That is what distresses me," he replied. "If I had known him I would have taught him. To think," he added, "that I should have been in the same ship with him all these months and should not have told him of Christ!"

Francis himself was soon at the point of death. A doctor who attended him related afterwards that he was three days delirious. Towards the end of February he sailed for India with Sousa, leaving his two companions at Mozambique to follow on with the next ships from Lisbon. The journey from Mozambique to Goa took rather over two months. The first pause was at Melinda. Xavier tells in his letter of a conversation he had with a thoughtful Mohammedan there, who wished to know if Christianity was declining in Europe to the same extent as the faith of Islam was in Melinda, where out of seventeen mosques only three were now in use, and even these were almost empty. He also tells of another man who confessed that he had given the Mahdi two more years in which he might come to the rescue, failing which he was going to renounce the Faith. "It is the fate of infidels and of great sinners," Xavier concludes, "to be ill at ease."

The ship touched next at the island of Socotra, where, as Francis writes, "the people are Christian in their own opinion." They were indeed Assyrian Christians, or Nestorians, as their enemies called them. Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, had died in exile in the fifth century, condemned and deposed for heresy. A little later the persecutions against him and his disciples began to bear fruit.

Dishonoured in their own country, his followers went farther east, and Persia, to which Christ's teaching had already penetrated, received them. By the thirteenth century, before the great persecutions of Tamerlane, they had twenty-five bishops scattered throughout eastern Europe and Asia. Most of them were ignorant of their origin and believed that they were descended from the converts of St Thomas the Apostle, who was supposed to have penetrated far into Asia. To this day they are often referred to as Thomists. Xavier's notes on them are extremely interesting:

"They are a very ignorant folk," he writes; "they can neither read nor write; they have no books nor writings . . . they have churches and crosses and lamps. Each place has its *caciz*, he is like a cleric among us. They can neither read nor write. They know numbers of prayers by heart. They go to church at midnight and in the morning at the hour of vespers, and in the afternoons at the hour of compline. . . . They have no bells, they call the people with wooden clappers as we do in Holy Week. Even the *cacizes* do not understand the prayers, for they are not in their own language; I believe they are in Chaldean. I wrote down three or four of the prayers that they use. . . . They sometimes say Aleluya, aleluya . . . they do not baptize nor do they know what baptism is. . . ."

Then follows a half-comical, half-tragic episode:

"There was a woman in that place, a Moor, who had two small sons: I wished to baptize them, not knowing they were of Moorish descent. They went

fleeing from me to their mother, and told her how I wished to baptize them, and she came weeping to me, not to baptize them, for she was a Moor, and did not wish to be a Christian, still less did she wish her children to be so. The native Christians told me certainly not to baptize them, even if their mother *did* wish. This was because they did not hold Moors worthy of becoming Christians."

It is interesting to notice that Xavier says in the above letter, "They do not baptize." Evidently they had by that time given up the rite of baptism in Socotra. That the sect originally used to baptize is certain, for in 1908 Professor Pelliet discovered a very beautiful Nestorian baptismal hymn at Sha-Chou in China.[1] Xavier is quite right when he surmises that the prayers are in Chaldean. The form of worship then must have been very similar to that of the other branches of the Nestorian Church, both then and now. "They call the people with wooden clappers," says Francis. On the Nestorian monument in China, erected in A.D. 781, the following words occur:

"(His ministers) carry the Cross with them as a sign. They travel about wherever the sun shines, and try to reunite those that are beyond the pale—*i.e.* those that are lost. *Striking the wood*, they proclaim the glad tidings of love and charity."

The little picture which Xavier gives in the same letter of the Moorish woman and her Nestorian enemies is a tragic comment on these last words.

[1] A translation of this hymn is to be found in *The Nestorian Monument in China*, by Professor P. Y. Saeki, p. 66.

These Christians had been cruelly persecuted, almost exterminated, by the Moors, and the bitter hatred between persecutors and persecuted had long ago drowned the message of glad tidings, so that now the Striking of the Wood was become nothing more than a meaningless noise. The remembrance of what he had seen in that island made more than a mere sentimental impression on the traveller's mind. He never rested until he had sent them further light. In 1549 he writes to Loyola that they had four missionaries there.

The ships left Socotra at the end of January, and reached Goa on 6th May 1542.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST MONTHS IN INDIA

Oft when the word is on me to deliver,
  Lifts the illusion and the truth lies bare:
Desert or throng, the city or the river,
  Melts in a lucid Paradise of air,—

Only like souls I see the folk thereunder,
  Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings,
Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
  Sadly contented in a show of things.

F. W. H. Myers, *St Paul.*

All that Xavier ever saw in perspective in this vivid and complicated maze of life was the vineyard of souls. Take, for example, his first descriptions of Goa. They are summary and quite uninforming. He was much too busy, the moment he set foot on the land of his evangelic dreams, with baptizing and confessing and teaching, to play the descriptive traveller and historian. We have perhaps a little more leisure than he had—God forgive us—and can pause for a moment to look upon the strange pageant, the grotesque and tragic background of the Saint's earliest labours in India. Although by no means so imposing a city as it became a hundred years later, Goa was already, in the middle of the sixteenth century, beginning to make a fine show. So long as four months after his arrival Francis had not penetrated the sheep's clothing to the ravenous wolf within. But later on he did. "It is a city

wholly of Christians," he writes now, "a sight for sore eyes. There is a monastery with a large number of Franciscan monks, and a cathedral, very fine, and with plenty of canons, and numerous other churches. One has reason to give many thanks to God our Lord that the name of Christ flourishes so in such distant lands, among so many heathen."

It was true that some new churches had been built, but in addition to that the pagan temples had been seized by the Portuguese, and their altars redecorated with the symbols of the Christian faith. There were a governor's palace, gardens, villas; wide streets where the richest merchandise of India lay exposed for sale; market-places where Portuguese adventurers, drunk with their sudden wealth, bought for themselves silk and jewels and beautiful slave girls. The churches were well attended—for churchgoing was for too many, then as now, a form of social parade. The favourites of the rich colonists were carried there in litters, surrounded by slaves and admirers; in one dim corner the priests performed their unobtrusive tasks, while in the centre of the church the riff-raff of Portugal in their silken hose and feathered hats laughed and talked with their latest flames. When the bell rang, and the Host was elevated, there was a moment of pious silence, hands were raised. "Good Lord have mercy on us!" they cried, and crossed themselves, as they resumed the broken thread of their discourse.

At the moment of Xavier's arrival famine on a titanic scale was sweeping over the eastern world. The poorer quarters of Goa were a morass of destitution. But the hideousness of the contrasted social circumstances in so small a space was unnoticed

except by a few. Still, men and women alike had an inkling of the desperate brevity of those hours of sensuous splendour. The new colonists demanded a fair exchange of goods. Had they not brought the Cross to India? And, if they gave India a new religion, had they not a right to take from India a new morality? Climate and custom encouraged them; there were no western wives near enough to be jealous, and had not the great Albuquerque encouraged them to mate with the native women, and thus loyally provide garrisons for the fortresses, and navies for their king? Francis found the Portuguese harem to be a common institution, and he encountered a large and pitiful population of half-castes, many of them slaves, and all of them ignorant and uncared-for. These half-castes fraternized with the lowest native class, the pariahs, who had nothing to lose by coming into contact with strangers. There were not many Brahmins in Goa at this time, and the artisan class was chiefly composed of Hindus. The Arabs retained a large part of the trade. This racial and religious confusion, whose only tended growth was the desire for gain, bore in itself from the first the seeds of decay.

Albuquerque's secretary, Correa, who had come to India in 1512, thus concludes, in 1556, his *Lendas*:

"Here murderers go back to the kingdom without the least fear that justice, either human or divine, will punish their crimes or their robbery of Christians, Moors, natives, and foreigners. How many offences against God and incredible crimes have I seen! The guilty ones would appear before the king, but there was no punishment. . . . The evil is that the

governors live with nothing to fear. . . . I have seen those who are deep in guilt and clearly condemned arriving in Portugal and being honoured there because they came back with great wealth. . . . As for the robbers, they give the judges part of the stolen money and keep the rest and triumph and have the favours of the court just like honest men."

Francis Xavier was by no means the first genuine evangelist to set foot on this continent. Legend has it that it was St Thomas the Apostle who led the way thither. History does not countenance that tale. It is only known that the Nestorian missions flourished as early as the seventh century, and that in the thirteenth century, before the overland routes were closed by the Turks, Franciscan and Dominican friars had penetrated India.

In 1500 eight Franciscans went out with d'Alvarez Cabal, and in 1503 a few Dominicans arrived. Some of these did noble work, but the religious situation was an impossible one. Only a saint could make any impression on Portuguese India in the sixteenth century. It is usual to marvel at the meagreness of the results of Xavier's work. For those who know anything of the circumstances the amazing thing is, not how little he did, but how much. There is a phrase in one of his later letters which gives the key to his vocation: "I must open up a way." When we discover that he opened many doors, and each at the peril of his life and at the price of untold privation and suffering, we begin to realize that those who say he was restless and lacking in perseverance and patience have not understood him. There were more men willing to follow him and to

continue the work he inaugurated than there were men capable of opening up new fields and seeking out the waiting tribes.

So he only stayed in Goa a few months, although the condition of that town, had he been called to work there, would have given him ample scope till the end of his days. His first step was to report himself at the episcopal palace and present his official papers—the papers announcing his privileges and powers as Papal Nuncio—to the Bishop. "I will use none of these powers without your authority," he said, with a seductive humility which gained for him the affection of his Bishop from that time forth. Immediately afterwards he went to the Portuguese hospital, which stood over the harbour, and which was used chiefly to shelter the stream of sick and dying travellers who disembarked from the European ships. There he found a lodging, and began to nurse and look after the patients, sleeping at the foot of the beds of those who were dangerously ill, so that he might reach them quickly if they called.

The awful contrasts of wealth and poverty provoked him to go from villa to villa, begging for the lepers and the destitute and the prisoners; and Gonçalvez says he gained much help by this means, and that before the end of 1542 the city showed some change for the better, thanks to his zeal. We gather that this begging from door to door for those in need was not quite the old simple medieval proceeding, but had already in it something of more modern methods; that Xavier made a reasonable and intellectual appeal to the richest citizens for large sums of money, and laid it out with care and

precision on various charities. There is much in that isolated poorly-clad figure, with its meek celestial gestures, of the aspect of the primitive Italian paintings, but there are also tones in his voice and hints in his manner foreshadowing Arnold Toynbee and the modern philanthropists.

During his first few weeks in India Francis still wore the old gown which he had had when he left Europe. Then he decided to dress like the native priests, and he begged the major-domo of the hospital to supply him with one of those cheap sleeveless garments which were used by the lowest class of native priest. The steward gave him instead a handsome coat of silk, but Francis refused to wear it, and insisted on getting what he wanted. His shoes soon wore through, and the kindly major-domo, "seeing them to be worn-out and broken, and the upper leather and soles clownishly sewn together, brought him a new payre. But he, being everywhere like himself, would by no means be entreated to change his old shoes for new." The black cotton tunic, too, soon grew ragged, for it was not often still, but Francis paid no heed. At last some of his Portuguese friends stole it away by night, and replaced it by a new one. In the morning Francis put on the new one, and wore it all day without noticing the change. Then at night his friends asked him to supper. One of the translators of Bouhours' *Life* quaintly tells what happened:

"'Tis perhaps to do honour to our table,' said one among them, 'that you are so spruce to-day in your new habit!'

"Then casting his eyes upon his clothes, he was

much surprised to find himself in so strange an Equipage. At length being made sensible of the Prank which they had played him, he told them smiling *that it was no great wonder that this rich cassock, looking for a Master in the dark, could not see its way to somebody who deserved it better.*"

It is now for the first time that we hear of his favourite plan of carrying with him a little bell, to gather his flock together:

"Up and down the streets he went, a little bell in his hand, crying, 'Faithful Christians, send your boys and girls and slaves to the *Santa doctrina*, for the love of God!' At this summons a crowd of people of all sorts would gather round, and he would put them in rows, and lead them to the Church of the Rosary. . . . Making the sign of the cross, he spoke to them in a loud voice, with such devotion that the people, and above all, the children, fell into complete sympathy with him. To these he taught hymns which contained the holy doctrine, and thus he fixed the teaching on their minds. Then, with outstretched arms, he intoned a kind of litany, of which each verse held one point of teaching, and that was followed by a chanted response, explaining an act of faith. Master Francis finished the service, the old chronicler adds, by an explanation of an article of the creed, or one of the commandments. Master Francis suited his words to the intelligence of the least of his listeners, using a kind of Portuguese patois, the only language these folk understood."

Of his work in the hospital he writes to Ignatius that far more come to confession than he has

time to hear, and that well over three hundred boys attend his class for Christian teaching. On Sundays he always goes to the leper hospital. He is about to set out, with three natives who know Portuguese, to Cape Comorin, where he hopes by the prayers of his brethren and the Divine grace to serve God well. It is a life, he says—and we have seen how he lived—that "brings great refreshment, and many and great comforts. For those who delight in the Cross of Christ our Lord such labours are rest, and to end them, or to fly from them, death. What death is so great as to know Christ and then to leave Him?" And he signs himself "Your useless brother in Christ."

On the same day Xavier writes to Loyola some details about the proposed college at Goa. It is to be twice the size of the chapel of the Sorbonne, and they have already enough money to keep a hundred scholars. The funds (this does not at all perturb him) have been mainly supplied by the revenues of the Hindu temples of the neighbourhood, which by a royal edict had been forcibly taken over by the Portuguese Government and converted into "Christian" churches. He begs for men of good education and a good preacher to be sent out to train young native priests, and he also asks for a various assortment of indulgences for the governor and his wife, and others.

There are some pictures of the Saint at this time, during what might be called, for lack of a better name, his leisure hours, that we must not altogether pass by. "Where is this wonderful Xavier?" a Spanish newcomer demanded. He was pointed out, seated on the sea front at a gaming-table, playing

cards with a notorious libertine. "*That* a saint? Why, that's just a priest like the rest!" But a little later Xavier left his companions, and he was followed by the grandee's servant, to see where he would go next. This servant tracked him to a quiet palm grove, and there he was on his knees, his uplifted face lit with a burning ecstasy of adoration, lost in joyful communion with God. And from other tales of the same kind we know that the notorious libertine would leave the gaming-table with some words ringing in his ears that were not very easy to forget.

He made many friends among the colonists and was a popular guest in their houses. But there usually came a day when the head of the house, thanks to Francis, grew discontented with the social irregularity of his *ménage*, and finally, we are told, the Saint himself would officiate at the marriage of his chastened host and the most worthy female member of his household. So consistently did Francis pursue this course in the many houses which he visited, that the moral tone of the city is said to have altered visibly during those summer and autumn months of 1542; for his energy and enthusiasm had shamed the listless local clergy into something like imitation of his ardour, and a genuine revival of morals appears to have taken place.

But Xavier's duties as Apostolic Nuncio in the largest diocese in the world called him farther afield. He did not even wait for the two companions of the earlier part of his voyage, Camerino and Mansillas, but in the end of September 1542 set out for Cape Comorin.

For each journey Xavier seems to have allowed

himself one luxury: the last had been a travelling-rug; this time, in addition to some sheets of paper, a few books, and a bit of leather to mend his shoes, he is reported to have carried a parasol. He sailed down the whole length of Malabar, and landing somewhere near Cape Comorin, proceeded on foot up the Piscarian coast. His only companions were three native Portuguese-speaking Christians from Goa. The Fishery Coast to the north of Comorin is a burning and inhospitable desert. But it was no random whim which had drawn Francis Xavier thither. He had heard in Goa how eight years ago the people there had been "converted" and then forsaken, and he had to go to their rescue.

The story of the earlier mission is a curious one. This mild and harmless race of pearl-fishers had been suffering much at the hands of extortionate Arab traders, and had at last been goaded into serious warfare with them. While this struggle was at its height, a Malabar prince, Juan de la Cruz, who, as his name reveals, had come into touch with the Portuguese and had become a "Christian," told the Paravas that he would show them a way out of all their troubles. "You must change into Christians," he said, "and then the Portuguese will come to your help, and you will see no more of those Mussulmans." So a deputation was sent up to Cochin, and all turned out as Juan de la Cruz had prophesied. The deputation was baptized, and a Portuguese fleet and some Franciscan monks went off immediately to the rescue. At the first boom of the cannon the Arabs fled, and the Franciscans came on shore and baptized twenty thousand natives on the spot.

But the climate and the cuisine were too much

for the Franciscans, and very soon they left the converts to their fate. The government officials were more attentive. They sent ships at regular intervals to ward off any Arabs who might be threatening to return, and for this protection they took handsome payment in pearls. The episcopal conscience at Goa, however, was not quite at rest about this distant corner of the diocese, and there were several young Paravas, at the time Xavier went to the Fishery Coast, in training in Goa and Lisbon, who were to be sent back later to tell their fellow-countrymen why they had been baptized. Meanwhile the hamlets and villages along the coast were startled by the figure of a white man, dressed like their own priests, carrying in one hand a little bundle, and in the other a parasol; young, fearless, gay, handsome—singing, as he walked with his three companions, strange songs in a strange tongue. Soon he was gathering round him all the babies and little children he could find, and sprinkling their faces with water and chanting over them some mysterious incantation, as he made the sign of a cross on their foreheads. That was what the white men had done eight years ago, and since then the Arabs had never come near, so the people brought their children to Xavier gladly.

There is a letter to Loyola from Tuticorin, written at this time, which says that "the Christians of these villages know no more of it than to say that they are Christians." And he goes on to describe how he baptized all the children who were not baptized. "So that I baptized a great multitude of infants who could not distinguish between their right hand and their left." The climax of this

letter is a charming one, and reveals the heart of a true lover of children. "When I came to these places the children would not let me read my office, nor eat nor sleep, but made me teach them some prayers. I began to understand then that 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

CHAPTER VIII

THE MISSIONARY AT WORK

My brothers struggling need a hand,
So long as any pulse is left in mine,
May I be absent even longer yet,
Plucking the blind ones back from the abyss
Though I should tarry a new hundred years !

A Death in the Desert.

No missionaries have spent so much time and pains over the rite of baptism as the early Jesuits. In this they simply showed their belief in the teaching of their Church, for according to that teaching a priest who baptized an infant saved it, in the event of its death before it reached maturity, from Limbo. More than that, he actually, by the rite, switched it on to powerful currents of grace. Francis Xavier baptized to an immense and unprecedented extent, but he was far more careful to follow up this work than has often been supposed.

As far as infant baptism was concerned, his untiring and indiscriminate zeal was, of course, perfectly orthodox. But the expedition with which he baptized older persons—and this is admitted by the Jesuits themselves—was not in keeping with the teaching of the primitive Church. In their disregard for that teaching Francis and the earlier Jesuit missionaries to India stand almost alone. Their methods are more akin to those first adopted in the reign of Constantine, when heathen converts began to pour swiftly into the fold.

It was then that the training which had in earlier days preceded baptism began to be given after the rite. This training was known as discipline, and was regarded in itself almost as a sacrament.

But there was a certain degree of reasonableness, as well as much of danger, in their method. An adult savage of a low type would probably learn as much doctrine in a fortnight as he would in two years. Was it right, these missionaries said, to hold back from him for so long a time as two years, or even two months, after he had been moved and attracted by the new teaching, the sacramental grace which baptism bestowed? No human teaching, they believed, could advance him so much as could the mysterious ray from heaven which lighted on everyone who partook this sacrament.

There were other reasons for hastening on the ceremony. By baptism, the native of India became a subject of Portugal. A sudden break was made in his life, which it was very difficult to go back upon. His name was changed, his manner of dress; sometimes, perforce, his occupation. Outwardly, at least, he had become a new creature. Hence the inward change may have been made more easy, the old temptations crippled of some of their power, and, above all, the old fears exposed and defeated. For the brief phrase, "Perfect love casteth out fear," is a beautiful summary of the effect of Christian teaching upon the heathen mind. In India, and especially among the lower castes, the people have always been under the spell of spiritual terror. The eastern mind is more sensitive to the Prince of the powers of the air and his legions than is the western, and often, when we are ignoring those powers, the Oriental is

constructing a fantastic and gruesome system of defences against them.

Xavier found the primitive Paravas living in a state of perpetual terror, haunted and harassed by demons, night and day. He gave them a perfunctory enough version of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and a version with many defects. Most fatal of all errors, he did not put into their keeping the Gospel writings themselves. But one thing he undoubtedly did, he brought an immense peace and joy to the generation who knew him personally; he came to them like a friendly voice and a friendly hand to children lost on a dark night.

Of comparative religion, of course, that generation knew nothing. Nor did the West study the psychology of the Oriental. And for some time at least, Francis did not know a word of Tamil. But his transcendent faith and imaginative sympathy opened up channels of communication between him and his fellow-creatures that are closed to lesser men. Not that he had earned his saintship lightly, or kept the fire of his genius burning without effort. The moral and spiritual discipline which he unceasingly and inexorably imposed upon himself from the time he first came under the influence of Loyola in Paris, until the end, startles one afresh every time one contemplates it. Here surely lies hid the innermost secret of the grafting of the sweet fruit of saintship upon the wild tree of genius.

His letters refer to his linguistic troubles. Xavier appears to have had a great talent for languages, and to have been a patient and hard-working student. Many of the old biographers assert that he had a miraculous power which allowed him to speak in the

language of whatever person he happened to address. There is no ground in fact for this assertion. But before he arrived in India he was proficient in at least six or seven different languages, and it is well known that every new tongue acquired makes the next one easier to learn. From Xavier's letters one gradually gathers that, like the Portuguese colonists, he used interpreters freely, but that, unlike the colonists, he picked up a great deal of the native language as he went along. It is not at all a miraculous thing for a talented linguist to be able to converse fairly fluently in a new tongue after living in the country for a few weeks, and it is easy to believe that Francis was vastly aided by his Latin versatility and subtlety of gesture, and by his intense sympathy and fine imagination. But we must not overlook such passages from his letters as these: "If we could speak the language I have no hesitation whatever in believing that many would become Christians. Please God we shall learn it in a short time, for already we begin to have a smattering of it." Or again: "Now we are among them like statues." "And now we must be as infants, learning the language."

Probably Xavier never accomplished so much as during the time when he laboured almost alone in Cape Comorin. There is an interval of fourteen months without any letters, but we know that he journeyed from village to village, travelling continually to and fro over a large district, across burning sands, on foot, in tropic sunshine or in tropic rain. His garments were ravaged by white ants. The food was scarce and monotonous—a little rice, a little fish, or, for a change, a bowl of

soup made with rice and peppercorns, or on Sundays a croquette made of rice. As we know, he was an abstainer on principle, and in those parts he quenched his thirst with sour milk. He took but one meal in the day. During this meal, we read, he was always surrounded by a crowd of the little children whom he loved so well. Of the details of his missionary work his own letters give the best account, but of his personal habits and disciplines those letters say nothing. From the letters of others, and from native testimony, it would appear that he slept no longer than two or three hours each night, and that all the time that was not spent in travelling or in preaching and teaching and baptizing, or in works of mercy, was spent in prayer. We may say that it is impossible that he took so little sleep as those historians would have us believe. But perhaps there is a state—whether in the body or out of the body God knoweth—when the servant of God is caught up into Paradise and given to feast of the heavenly manna to the rest and refreshment of the body as well as the nourishment of the soul. Perhaps in those hours of still rapture the unsleeping body may yet mysteriously reap the fruits of sleep.

We cannot tell how long he prayed by night, but by day he worked both hard and long. One of the natives at Cape Comorin said after he was dead that the Father Francis worked hard: he drank no wine, nor ate bread; but when he went to the homes of the Portuguese he ate and drank what they gave him. And however tired the Father came home he always had a lesson with the boys.

There is a long letter written from Cape Comorin to the Fathers in Rome, which gives us a full account

of his work among the Paravas. Viewed in the light of modern missionary methods, this letter is deeply interesting. We are accustomed to accept without questioning some very severe criticisms of Xavier's work, and this letter is certainly, in some parts, antipathetic to a Protestant reader. But it shows us too that the method of the great Jesuit missionary was not so far astray as our ignorance may have led us to suppose.

A study of the Report of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910 shows what an important place the Apostles' Creed has occupied, and must occupy, in the work of evangelization. Professor MacEwen says :

" In the Conference Reports you will discover an item simple but grand, repeated by many missionaries—Episcopalian, Baptist, Wesleyan, Presbyterian—that the statement of faith which they find to have most value, and on which they lay most stress, is that same Apostles' Creed. . . . The central beliefs which our missionaries teach were the central beliefs of the men through whose mission Christianity first expanded."

Again we read :

" The choice and arrangement of catechetical subjects may, on the whole, follow the example of the ancient Church—Bible History, Old and New Testament lessons on the Life of Christ, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments." [1]

The great Apostolic teachers, from whose midst this Creed emerged, were specially fitted, both by

[1] *Report of the World Missionary Conference*, Vol. II., p. 60.

outward circumstance and by inward inspiration, to present Christianity in a form which, by its simplicity and its universality, would appeal to East and West alike.

Outwardly, by their geographical position, they were in touch with the three essential sources of modern civilization, Judea, Greece, Rome, and they were among these peoples at the very time when they were undergoing a process of fusion.

Inwardly, the makers of the Apostles' Creed had the greatest, and indeed the only, reason for authority. They were convinced that they had *in themselves* no wisdom, that they were entirely taught of God. "God hath spoken unto us." "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." "I that speak unto thee am he." "Lo, I am with you alway." "If any man speak, speak as it were oracles of God." These men did not master a faith, a faith mastered them—it was the faith, Paul said in an amazing phrase, "to which ye have been delivered."

And while Calvin was proving to the Romanists in Europe that, tested by this Creed, they were not such true children of the Church as the Protestants were, Francis Xavier, the greatest missionary of the Roman Church, was teaching this Creed in all simplicity, far away from the noise and clamour of the religious wars. It is one more illustration of the truth which is being emphasized to-day as never before, that it is above all in missionary work that the Church must discover the secret of unity.

"I sought out," Xavier says, "the people who knew both Malabar and our language. Then after many meetings and great travail we drew up a form

of worship. First, the sign of the Cross, acknowledgment of the Three Persons in the Godhead. Then the Creed and the Commandments, Our Father, Ave Maria, Salve Regina and the General Confession from Latin into Malabar. After having translated them into their language and learned them by heart, I went all through the place with a bell in my hand, gathering all the boys and men that I could, and taught them twice a day, and in a month taught them these prayers, arranging so that the boys should teach their father and mother and all the household and neighbours what they had learned in the school.

"On Sundays I collect everyone, old and young, to say the prayers. They seem very happy and come with great joy. . . . I go over the Creed article by article, treating each one of the twelve separately. I make them see that to be a Christian is nothing if it is not to believe firmly and without hesitation the Twelve Articles. . . . I make them repeat the Creed oftener than other formulas, because only if he believes the Twelve Articles can a man call himself a Christian."

He goes on in this letter to describe the adult baptisms. The converts have to repeat the General Confession, then the Creed. At each article Xavier asks if they truly believe it, and when they answer yes, and when he has "explained the Law of Christ which must be kept unto salvation," he baptizes them.

This sounds quite a careful preparation for baptism, but when we consider the immense numbers of the converts made about this time, and a little later on in Travancore, we must infer that this must have

been some sort of group baptism, the whole class or congregation or village responding together to the questions asked. In no other way would it have been physically possible for Xavier to baptize so many people.

For baptizing was by no means his only occupation. "Crowds come to me," he writes, "asking me to go to their homes to pray for their invalids, and the sick have come to me in such numbers, that to read a portion of the Gospel to them, apart from anything else, has fully occupied me, and to teach the children, baptize, translate the prayers, answer questions, bury the dead, respond to the devotion of those who send for me, and those who come to me for help—it is an endless occupation." It is in this same letter that he sends the impassioned appeal, of which we quoted a sentence or two on an earlier page, to those in the universities of Europe to come east and save souls. "If," he says, "while those (in the universities) studied letters, they would study, too, the account which God will ask of them, and of the talents He has given them, many would say: 'Lord, here I am; what wilt Thou have me to do? Send me where Thou wilt, if even to India.'"

It is a self-revealing word, that last, "if even to India." Francis is writing in haste, as he always writes, and the hand which never has written one self-pitying or whimpering word, here for one moment trembles into a phrase that lifts the veil. "Where Thou wilt, if *even* to India." This was the very extremity of his Father's will.

But the dregs of that cup are never bitter. Near the end of this same long letter we find these joyful and mystical words:

"I don't know what more to write you of these parts, except that such are the consolations which God our Lord communicates to those who go among the heathen and convert them to the faith of Christ, that if there be contentment in this life, it means this. I often happen to hear a person who goes among those Christians say: 'O Lord, give me not such consolations, and now that of Thine infinite goodness and mercy Thou dost give them, take me to Thy holy glory, because after Thou dost give such a rich inward communion, it is a pain for Thy creatures to go on living without seeing Thee.'"

Those simple Paravas had many amazing tales about this great teacher who had sojourned among them, who had been so like a brother, and yet so like a god. Their attempts to pass on their impressions of a life, which was in truth a sustained miracle, are interesting. A half-blind man describes other men as "trees walking," a half-awakened soul describes a saint at his prayers as "one raised from the ground." A man who is physically dumb conveys his meaning by grotesque gestures, a man who is spiritually dumb by strange figures of speech. The primitive way of picturing a man in whom God dwells is to paint him in the act of performing in the material world what God does in the spiritual world, to paint him healing the sick and raising the dead. These Paravas described Francis in these terms, and in doing so they were only struggling to express the truth they so dimly apprehended. The method was not confined to the natives. Wherever Francis went there were simple souls who used this language in speaking or writing of him.

After he had worked for over a year in the pearl fisheries and had established some sort of system of native supervision, Francis left his new converts for a few months and visited Goa and Cochin. He took with him to Goa a number of young Paravas, to be trained in the new college there. He found this college in a flourishing state.

The visit to Goa was a brief one, full of consultations, inspections, reports, and plans for the future. There was a letter awaiting him from Loyola, written two years before, and announcing that he had been elected General of the Society in April 1541.

Already in January 1544, a few weeks after leaving the Paravas, we find the Saint on his return voyage making a halt at Cochin, and in February, after an absence of only about two months, we find him once more on the Fishery Coast. But "the early dew of morning has passed away at noon." Difficulties of all kinds begin to besiege the pioneer missionary. "It is the morrow of conversions," a French writer has well said, "which is the hardest time both for converts and teachers." And this mission was hopelessly understaffed. Francisco Mansillas, Xavier's chief assistant, was a broken reed. But, worst of all, Portuguese soldiers and traders, of whom up till now we have heard nothing in this part of the country, began to mingle with the natives on errands which were not those of Francis Xavier.

The situation must have been an intolerable one for the missionary. Hardly had he impressed upon those childish tribes the simplest rudiments of Christian teaching, when his own brothers, professing his own faith, came into the same villages where he was working, and perpetrated the vilest acts of

cruelty and dishonesty. The natives were incensed, and no wonder; and after a particularly scandalous slave-raid at Punicale, a wild tribe of horsemen from the north, fearing probably that the raiding would spread into their own territory, swept down upon the innocent Paravas, and hundreds of them were killed or put to flight because they had accepted the religion of those "Christians." There is a story, probably authentic, of how a troop of those wild horsemen one day rushed upon a Parava village in which the Saint happened to be working. The villagers fled in terror, but Francis, after kneeling a few moments in prayer, rose, and himself alone confronted the invaders with such an air of gravity and authority that in confusion they turned their horses' heads and went back the way they came.

In July he went on foot alone to the Cape, throughout this wildly disturbed country, in order to organize relief for the masses of poor fisher folk who, in want and sickness, were sheltering in the caves and holes of the earth.

In the middle of November he set out for Travancore at the urgent invitation of the Rajah there. He made this long journey, as usual, on foot, attended this time by two or three faithful natives. These, we read, kept guard over him every night while he slept, for the country was still disturbed and full of enemies. They were several times attacked, and once Francis was wounded. Another time it is reported that they set fire to his bed while he was praying, and one of his adoring biographers tells us that he noticed nothing until he found himself surrounded by a little heap of ashes instead of a mattress.

The Rajah doubtless sent this invitation to Francis

to come to Travancore largely, if not wholly, for political reasons. Portugal was a dangerous enemy, but a most helpful ally. The Rajah knew that the Saint was out for souls, and the cute old man dangled his unconverted subjects before the missionary's eyes in as seductive a way as he could. Francis was publicly proclaimed the Great Priest, and all faithful subjects were told to show him the same obedience which they showed to the Rajah, the Great King.

The Rajah himself, and the Brahmins and Nairs who constituted the upper castes, must have looked on the whole movement with indifference, if not with scorn. Xavier's message was nothing to them. It neither touched them nor moved them. But a change of religion could do the poor outcaste Macuas no harm, or even if it did them a little harm the protection of the Portuguese cannon was cheap at the price.

So, for one month, Francis ploughed and sowed, with unprecedented and titanic energy. It was the rainy season, and he went barefoot from village to village, his tunic in tatters, and his old black hood a lamentable thing to see. Before the month was ended he had baptized ten thousand persons, and to each one he baptized he gave a new name, written on a piece of paper. This piece of paper came to have a political as well as a religious significance. It was a kind of passport, and gave to the bearer the rights of protection due to a Portuguese subject. One can picture the Rajah scanning these little tickets with a smile of satisfaction, and telling himself that the Great Priest was playing a fair game. And the Great Priest doubtless smiled too as he looked upon the little tickets and remembered the words of

Jesus, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Enthusiastic crowds destroyed the idols and the temples. Churches were hastily built, and rude crosses placed there. The Macuas spoke the same language as the Paravas, so Xavier had no difficulty in teaching them the Creed and the Catechism.

One can hardly explain this tremendous conversion. But the contrast between the outward authority of the representative of Portugal and of western civilization, and the personal appearance and bearing of the Saint, must have been a strangely moving one, and may account for much. A Portuguese, João Vaz, has left us an interesting picture of Francis as he was in these days in Travancore :

"I lived six months with the Father Master Francis. He went barefoot, with a poor torn gown, and a kind of hood of black stuff. Everyone loved him dearly. . . . *The Great Father*, that is the name that has been given to Father Master Francis in these lands. He has caused forty-four or forty-five churches to be built along the coast where the new Christians are. . . . He speaks the language of the country very well. Often in that flat country-side, followed by two thousand, three thousand, six thousand folk, he would stop, climb up a tree, and from there preach to the people."

In December 1544 Xavier went north to Coulam and Cochin to arrange with the authorities there for the official protection and favour which he had promised to his new converts. Then he was to go back to the Cape, but to Cochin came the news of a great massacre of native Christians in Ceylon, so

instead of going south Francis leapt into a swift native boat, and skimmed off to interview the governor in Cambay, and to receive his advice and help. The governor's counsel was simple, "Go with my authority, and see that the Rajah responsible for this massacre is immediately put to death." Who was to succeed him? That seemed simple too. His brother who had brought the bad news to Francis had offered immediately to become a Christian if he were rewarded by the crown which was to tumble from his doomed brother's head. That would surely be all right. Neither Francis nor Sousa knew about another more reasonable claimant who was already a Christian.

So Xavier darted back to execute his fatal errand, only making a brief pause at Cochin to send some letters with the home-going mails. This batch of letters was to produce a great impression in Europe. The news they carried was sensational enough. At Travancore, in a few weeks, ten thousand converts; in Ceylon hundreds of native martyrs, for the massacred natives that Francis was flying south to avenge had been given their choice between a return to idolatry and death, though only a few months earlier neither they, nor their teacher who died with them, had ever heard of the Christian faith. These letters despatched, he rushed on to Negapatam, straining his eyes as he neared the harbour to catch sight of ships. For an armed Portuguese fleet was to have been there, ready to assist him to avenge the martyrs. But there were no ships there. What had happened? Everyone received him coldly. All his proposals fell flat. Nobody wanted to avenge the martyrs. And the

Portuguese commander was rolling in wealth, and would not dream of remembering anything about the martyrs. For a Portuguese ship had run ashore on the coast, and the Rajah, clever rogue, had given the Portuguese commandant half of the spoils, and was keeping the other half, he said, for a surety against any revenge being taken upon him for the extermination of the Christians. It was a bitter moment for Francis: he let off some steam in a letter to Rodriguez:

"Do not allow any friend of yours to come to India in the employment and service of the King, for it can truly be said of them (*i.e.* the King's officers), '*Let them be blotted out of the book of life, and not be written with the righteous*' . . . everyone takes the same road—*rapio, rapis*. And I am terrified to see how many moods and tenses and participles of this wretched verb those who come here can invent."

It is not likely that he blamed himself for having used the dubious weapons of political diplomacy. He had done so before, and he would do so again. But these weapons were sharpened to other uses than his. It was that which revolted and angered him. He had thought it possible to have a political organization whose sole end would be the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. But he had come to days of perplexity and disillusionment:

"I do not know what will become of me," he writes; "may God our Lord grant us at the right time knowledge of His most holy will, and make us always ready to fulfil it whenever it is clearly revealed and made known to us. For it is good we

have to be pilgrims in this life, ready to go wherever we can best serve God our Lord."

The days of darkness and perplexity persisted. Francis had reached one of the great spiritual crises of his life, and yet the still small voice had not spoken. For the first time since his conversion we see him hesitating, uncertain, tentative. He waited still, but no light came. Then he felt the need for complete loneliness and silence. "I was obliged," he writes, "to go to St Thomé."

So the Saint went on furlough for five months. He set out for Meliapor by sea; but the ship was driven back by tempest, and he had to go on foot. Close by Meliapor, according to the Nestorian traditions, were buried the actual bones of the doubting Apostle. A little heap of ruins marked his legendary tomb, and the Portuguese had built a church upon the spot, where pilgrims might come to pray. And here they were told how St Thomas had lost his life. One day when he was in his hermitage in the wood, and while he was praying to God, surrounded by a great flock of peacocks, an idolater passed by, and not seeing the Saint sent an arrow from his bow towards one of the peacocks. But instead of hitting the bird, the arrow lodged in the side of St Thomas, who thereupon "very sweetly adored his Creator and gave up the ghost."

Francis lodged in a little clergy-house adjoining the church, and the priest in charge has left a written account of the visit. They ate at the same table, he tells us, and often talked together. But St Francis spoke only of spiritual things. It was not a formal retreat, nor a complete holiday. He could

not keep himself back, even then, from doing his Master's work. His teaching and his holy life, this priest tells us, made a great change in the town of Meliapor. He turned away many from mortal sin, and married a great number of people. The social life in this Portuguese colony was very much like that in Goa. It was the Saint's habit, the priest goes on to say, to go out of the house every night secretly, cross the little garden and enter the church. Legends of resounding blows with the devil heard in there, and of miraculous illuminations received, suggest that here was Xavier's Penuel, and that the record of the struggle and the victory was somehow visible upon his body, and thus childishly interpreted by the uninitiated, as these things so often are.

"In this holy house of San Thomé," he writes, "I took it as a duty to occupy myself in praying to God our Lord to grant me to know in my soul His most holy will, and to give me the firm resolution to fulfil it, and the firm hope that He, who has given the will, will give the power to fulfil it. It pleased God to remember me with His accustomed mercy, and with much interior comfort I felt and knew that it was His will that I should go to those parts of Malacca where Christians have lately been made . . . though no ship at all leave this coast this year, and a catamaran (a small and rudely built native boat) was leaving, I would go in it confidently, with all my hope placed in God, for whose sake alone I am making this journey."

And he signs himself, as he so often did, "Your least brother, Francisco."

CHAPTER IX

ISLANDS OF HOPE IN GOD

Here is thy footstool and there rest thy feet where live the poorest and lowliest and lost. . . . My heart can never find its way to where thou keepest company with the companionless among the poorest, and loneliest and lost.—RABINDRANATH TAGORE, *Gitanjali.*

AT the end of September Francis arrived in Malacca. His fame had preceded him. The people ran out from the harbour to receive him, shouting with joy, "The Holy Father is here!" Malacca was the Singapore of the sixteenth century. The harbour was immense, and the rendezvous of many hundreds of trading vessels—Indian, Arabian, Chinese, Levantine, Portuguese. Already the spires of Christian churches rose from among the eastern mosques and domes. But hitherto Christianity had been little more than part of the political equipment of Portugal. It was not a religion which the invaders from the West could easily proclaim with any dignity or sincerity as their own. In 1521 the Spaniards, arriving from the East, had annexed the Philippines. Since then it had been difficult to decide where their property ended and that of the Portuguese began. From Malacca Xavier writes in 1545:

"I preach every Sunday in the Cathedral, and I am not so content with my sermons as those who have the patience to hear me. Every day for an

hour or more I teach the children the prayers. I stay at the hospital, confess the poor sick, say Mass and communicate them. . . . My chief occupation is to translate the prayers from the Latin . . . not to know the language is very troublesome."

This last sentence, even if there were not other similar passages scattered throughout the letters, would demolish with one stroke the persistent tradition that Francis possessed the gift of tongues, and the almost equally persistent tradition that he never took the trouble to learn the native languages or to translate anything into them. And, it will be seen from those sentences, he did not believe in people saying their prayers in Latin if they did not know Latin.

In the same letter he begs the Jesuits at home to send out a number of the Company every year, and he adds that they should come well drilled in the Exercises, but that "in going among the heathen scholarship is not necessary." With regard to this last point, the harsh hand of experience was to change his opinion very soon. From Lisbon he had written to Loyola urging him to send men even if they had not much *letras*, and he repeats this advice continually. Then the collapse of Francisco Mansillas changed his policy. This very stupid and thankless youth had gone out from Lisbon with Xavier, and he had lavished upon him a most abounding patience and a wealth of instruction and love. One of the French biographers, Cros, has called Xavier's letters to him a "journal of apostolic solicitude"; another, Brou, says of them that they are "precious above all others." But now Xavier

ordered Francisco to come out to the Moluccas, and he flatly, probably through fear, refused. Thereupon he was dismissed from the Company for disobedience, and he disappears from the page of history. One act of grace, however, he performed: he tied a string round the letters he had received from the Saint, and left them as his legacy to the Company of Jesus. From this time on, Francis no longer asks for men without scholarship. And if we look forward for a moment to the documents of 1552 we find sentences such as these:

"Beware that you never receive persons of little ability, judgment and reason, persons weak and worthless."

Again he writes:

"And don't receive men who have not great parts (that is the word he uses, just as the Scots talk of a 'lad o' pairts') and ability for our Company, *especially when they lack learning.*"

And again:

"Take care that you never make any of them priests, since our Father Ignatius forbids it so strictly, *unless they have learning* and a life approved many years. Look how many scandals result from the imperfect and *unlearned* who are made priests. . . . For ultimately a man shows of what he is made."

Xavier's ten years in the East had convinced him that he could not have too good men.

Valignano says that Malacca was much reformed by Xavier's visit. His manners there, as everywhere, were joyful and full of affection and sympathy.

When some soldiers put away their cards deferentially at his approach he told them to go on with their game ; soldiers, he said, need not behave like monks. But neither, he added to himself, need they behave like beasts, and he used the popularity he knew so well how to gain, for the furtherance of the Gospel. For that end he made himself, as the old historian says, " a soldier to the soldiers and a merchant to the merchants." But in Malacca, as elsewhere, we see him as a torrent, ever rushing onward to a farther goal. He soon writes to Goa that he is about to set out for the Moluccas, still farther eastward. This journey, like all his journeys, was a tour of exploration, an opening up of a way for others. He had learned now, he writes, what could be done in Goa and in Cape Comorin, and soon he would be able to see what could be made of the East Indies. And all the conversions and reforms which he effected as he went onward were rather an inevitable accompaniment of his torrential personality than, as those who know him vaguely are apt to think, the first-fruits of harvests which he too soon wearied of reaping. Further, it was his duty, as Papal Nuncio in the East, " to visit," as his French biographer Brou says, " one after the other, all the districts where the faith had already been planted, and to see with his own eyes what ought to be done."

On the 1st of January 1546 he left Malacca, and on the 14th of February he arrived at Amboina. During the whole of that and the following year he journeyed from island to island, searching out natives who had already been baptized and then forsaken, doing social work among the Portuguese colonists, and preaching and teaching and baptizing wherever he went.

Soon after his arrival in Amboina an armada from New Spain sailed into the port. "I was very busy," he writes, "during the three months those eight ships were here, preaching, confessing, visiting the sick, and helping them to a good death, which is very difficult to do with persons who have not lived in great conformity to the law of God." He goes on in the same letter to describe the reports he has had of the island of Moro, sixty leagues away, where some priests had worked for a while, some years previously, and then left again. For, as Francis writes, "the land of Moro is very dangerous, because its people are very treacherous, and put poison in food and drink. So the people who should have looked after the Christians stopped going there."

But Francis was not to be deterred by any such terrors. He decided to go and see about the Christians there, and reorganize a mission among them. "I wished to be conformed," he writes, "in my own small and weak way, to the saying of Christ our Redeemer and Lord: 'He who would save his soul shall lose it, but he who has lost his soul for my sake shall find it.' Many of my devoted friends," he adds, "tried to persuade me against going to such a dangerous land, and, seeing that they could not keep me back, they gave me a number of antidotes against poison. I thanked them for their love and goodwill. But I omitted to take the antidotes which, with such love and tears, they gave me. I did not wish to load myself with fear which I did not have, and still more, I wished to lose nothing of all my hope which I had placed in God; so I besought them to remember me in their prayers, which are the surest remedy against poison that can be found. . . . God

wished to prove us by those dangers . . . we hope in the Maker of all things, in whose Hand it is to make us strong when dangers are encountered for His love."

The voyage, as he expected, was full of peril, both from pirates and from storms. Yet those dangers, encountered for His love, brought with them a peculiar ecstasy. There is another striking passage in his letters of this time, written indeed in his own rushing, eager, unliterary way, but with a grandeur and beauty of its own :

" Those who find themselves in such dangers, and face them for His love alone, believe without any doubt that all creation is in obedience to the Creator, and know that the consolation at such a time is greater than the fear of death, since man must complete his days. And of these experiences, when the work is done and the danger past, a man can neither write nor speak. But an impression of what has been gone through remains on the memory, and forbids us, now or ever, to weary in the service of so good a Lord, and bids us hope in the Lord that He will give strength for His service, for His mercies have no end."

Those words which we have just quoted are not very literary, not even very lucid perhaps, but they are the words of a man who has known, as only the great saints have known, what it really means to count " anything a loss, compared to the supreme value of knowing Christ Jesus." With Paul he could say, after he embarked on this dark voyage : " For His sake I have lost everything (I count it all the veriest refuse) in order to gain Christ and be found, at death, in Him."

India was much farther off from Europe in those days than it is now, and the missionaries much more bitterly isolated. Francis' tender spirit was always conscious of this ; we can read how he felt the separation from his friends in many of his letters.

" Let me tell you," he writes, " what I have done so that I may never forget you. From the letters you wrote me I have cut out, dearest brothers, as a continual and special remembrance and for my great comfort, your names, written by your own hands, and these I always carry about with me, together with the vow of profession I made, for the comfort I get from them. To God our Lord I give thanks first, and then to you, most sweet Brothers and Fathers. For God made you such that to carry your names comforts me much."

He goes on to describe his difficulties with the language :

" Each of these islands has a language of its own, and there is an island where nearly every village has a different language. The Malay language, which is spoken in Malacca, is very general here. When I was in Malacca, I translated with great labour into this language the Creed, with an exposition of the Articles, the General Confession, Paternoster, Ave Maria, Salve Regina, and the Commandments. . . .

" I met a Portuguese merchant in Malacca, who was coming from a busy country called China (this is Xavier's first mention of China). This merchant told me that a very honourable Chinese who came from the King's court put many questions to him. Among other things he asked if Christians ate pork. The

Portuguese merchant answered yes, and asked him why he wanted to know. The Chinese replied that in his country there are many people who live among mountains, separate from others, who do not eat pork, and keep many feasts. I do not know what people this is, whether they are Christians who keep the old and new law, like those of Prester John, or if they are the tribe of the Jews of whom nothing is known. They are not Moors, everyone says. . . . They say that St Thomas the Apostle went to China and made many Christians, and that the Greek Church, before the Portuguese mastered India, used to send bishops to teach and baptize the Christians whom St Thomas said his disciples made in these parts."

These speculations of Xavier about the people who live among the mountains and keep many feasts and do not eat pork are very interesting. It is possible that they may have been Jews; early in the seventeenth century there were Jews discovered in China who had been settled there from time immemorial, and who had lost all their Scriptures, and had no rabbis, and barely a tradition left, but who still "ate not of the sinew that shrank." They cannot have been the Nestorian Christians who came to China in A.D. 635, for there were no Nestorians left in China after the great persecutions of Tamerlane in the fourteenth century; but there were—and are still—traces of the Nestorians left among the quasi-Christian secret sects, and especially in the widespread society in northern China known as "the Religion of the Pill of Immortality."

At this period Francis appears to have developed a

greater air of authority, a new certainty of himself, a more constant serenity. This is no doubt partly at least due to the fact that he was separated so much from Goa, and all that Goa stood for. The change is very noticeable in his letters. Joyfully he went from island to island, amid almost unparalleled scenes of squalor and savagery. In the little seaport towns there drifted hither and thither the wreckage of humanity, of every race and colour, directed only by avarice and animal desire; and farther inland the native tribes had hardly yet emerged from the level to which their brothers in the ports, having traversed the long mazes of civilization, were now so tragically returning. Xavier had entered one of the most stinking backwaters of the world; but here, more than anywhere else, he comes and goes with laughter and singing, and only weeps when he has to leave his friends, and when he sees them weeping at having to part with him.

Of Ternati, where he arrived in July 1546, he writes:

"It was the custom for the boys in the streets and the girls and women in the houses, day and night, the farmers in the fields and the fishers at sea, to sing, instead of vain songs, holy chants, such as the Creed, Paternoster, Ave Maria, Commandments, the Deeds of Mercy and the General Confession, and all in a language that all could understand."

Another writer says:

"I saw in Malacca how the Malay natives, while carrying goods to the ships, sang the Paternoster and the Ave. Formerly, before the coming of the

Father, they sang quite other things. And more, in the evenings, I could hear those same prayers being sung in all the houses."

These accounts remind us of the Bishop of Nola's descriptions of Niceta's missionary work. Niceta wrote the *Te Deum*, and was "a pioneer spreading abroad the name of Christ throughout the earth and in the depths of the sea." "O for the wings of a dove," says Nola, "that I might listen to those choirs." And he goes on to describe how Niceta had taught the sailors so that as they rowed they filled the sea-breezes with their godly strains, and the whales heard the loud Amen.

In October of 1546 Xavier passed on to the *Islas del Moro*, which lie between New Guinea and the Philippines. How had the paths of the Lord been prepared for him here? In 1526 a Portuguese commander with troops had landed amicably, bringing with him as a present to the chief a tapestry representing the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Katherine of Aragon. The chief begged him to take it away, for he believed the figures were enchanted, and would come alive in the night and kill him. Don Jorge took back the tapestry, and proceeded next to clear all the Spaniards out of the islands; for, according to the Portuguese interpretation of the papal division of the New World, these islands did not belong to Spain, so they belonged to Portugal. When he had got rid of the Spaniards, he poisoned the chief who had refused to accept the tapestry, and shut up his heirs in prison. He also shut up in prison a near relation of the murdered chief, because he suspected him of having stolen his

pet Chinese pig. When the natives protested, Don Jorge seized three of them, cut off the hands of two, and tied up the other alive to be worried to death by savage dogs. Next, he captured and beheaded the native regent, and then all the islanders left the island. Don Jorge was then recalled to Portugal and banished to the Brazils, and the natives returned to their island. They found their regent still in prison, but they found also some peaceable monks who seemed quite different from Don Jorge. An idyllic period followed, and many became Christians. The imprisoned regent was set free, on declaring himself a Christian. But to his subjects' horror, he almost immediately and very suspiciously died, leaving his kingdom by will to the King of Portugal. Only he could not bequeath the souls of his subjects. A few days later, the quiet monks lay poisoned in the jungle, and the fallen idols were uplifted, and garlanded with flowers.

These were the islands which Francis, with that remote and mystic humour which is so characteristic of him, called the Islands of Hope in God. "I never remember," he writes, "having had so great and so continual spiritual comfort as in these islands, nor so little sense of bodily troubles. . . . Islands of Hope in God it would be better to call them, than Islas del Moro."

Besides working on the coasts Francis made at least one expedition into the wild interior. No journey could have been more perilous or more difficult. He went on foot through forests and jungles where to-day a European only ventures in a palanquin hung from long bamboo poles. The natives were not easy to reach; they hid them-

selves in the depths of the forests. If a traveller approached they all fled within doors, and the village became silent and lifeless. Even to-day, a modern traveller says, a visitor to those villages produces the same effect. Xavier passed along the silent rows of huts, singing hymns as he went, till gradually the doors were withdrawn a little, and the natives peered out and came towards him, like wild birds to a bird-charmer. And then he smiled on them and touched them and caressed them, "as a father does to his children," says old Père Jarric.

Of his success among those people Xavier does not say much. But he did not leave this difficult field, into which he had cut his perilous way so bravely, without help. Father Beira and others were put in charge, and in 1569 we read that in the *Islas del Moro* are the most flourishing of all the Moluccan missions.

In 1547 Xavier prepared to return to India. His plan was to make his way slowly south to Amboina and there join the fleet which was shortly going westward via Malacca. But his friends in Ternati surrounded the ship on which he was about to embark, and would not let him go. They promised if he would wait with them a little while that they would send him to Amboina in a fast native boat in time to catch the fleet. So he stayed with them for other three months.

At last the moment of parting came. He embarked at midnight, "to avoid the weeping and mourning of friends." "But this," he writes, "did not work, for I could not hide from them. So the night, and the separation from my spiritual sons

and daughters, suggested to me that perhaps my absence would make for the salvation of their souls." The sentence is elliptical and obscure, but it seems to mean that as he himself, in the darkness and hour of separation, had felt himself thrown back upon God, so those poor folk, left in the dark without him, might feel the same, and be given what they sought.

Francis took back with him twenty young natives to be educated in the college at Goa. During the few days which he spent at Amboina on the westward journey he revisited the seven Christian districts there, and had a little chapel erected in each of them. He then took his twenty students to Goa, but only stayed there a few weeks before returning to Malacca, where he was presently joined by three members of the Company, Beira, Nunez and Ribeiro. He spent a month with them, making arrangements for them to take over the work which he had begun in the Moluccas and the *Islas del Moro.* "Helped by the experience I gained there," he writes, "I have been able to instruct them as to how they would have to manage."

And then the thrilling news came to Xavier, through some trustworthy Portuguese gentlemen, that some of their merchants had lately discovered several islands of unusual interest in the Far East, called the islands of Japan. Moreover, a native of these islands was in Malacca, come with two companions, or servants, all the way from Kagoshima in order to interview Francis Xavier, so impressed had he been by the accounts which the Portuguese merchants had given him of the great missionary and his work. Yajiro was his name.

"He came," Francis writes, "to seek me with a great desire to know about our religion. . . . He is a man who is very anxious to know, and that is the mark of a man who will profit greatly. . . . I asked him if the Japanese would become Christians if I went with him to his land. He answered that his countrymen would not become Christians straight away. First they would ask many questions, and would see what I answered and what I knew, and above all, whether I lived in accordance with what I said. . . . He tells me they are a people who rule themselves only by reason."

It is a touching conversation for us to contemplate from our far-off vantage-point in time. These two eager, ignorant, brilliant souls, with their little note-books—or was Yajiro's a parchment scroll ?—greedily exchanging paragraphs, creeds, geographical hints, and speaking in some queer Portuguese patois, and writing, the one in Japanese, the other in who knows what strange private compound of Basque and Latin and Spanish and Malay.

"A very dangerous voyage," Francis passes on the facts, lacking Fleet Street, to the Company of Jesus in Rome, "but very large islands, great tempests, Chinese thieves who sail that sea to rob, many ships lost there. The Japanese, unlike the Indians, a people most desirous of knowledge. If all the Japanese are like Yajiro, they are the most enquiring people in all the lands hitherto discovered. Pray to God, very dear Fathers and brothers, for those who may go thither. Yajiro can speak Portuguese. He is a good Japanese scholar. We shall translate all

the XII doctrines into Japanese, with a commentary on the articles of the faith."

We are come now to December 1547. The Nuncio has " opened up a way " in the East Indies, and left missionaries there, and has lads from their islands in training at the college in Goa, and now he leaves Malacca once more. He is radiant, but emaciated, in tattered cassock and worn-out shoes. And he does not embark alone. With him goes the little Japanese adventurer, bound for the college at Goa, " a man very anxious to know," and already to Francis a friend dearly beloved.

CHAPTER X

INDIA REVISITED

Who will rise up for me against the evil doers ? Who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity ?—*Psalms of David.*

At the beginning of 1548 Francis emerges from those dark and dreadful islands of the East, and returns to the comparative civilization of Goa. But the faith which had risen, in those terrible regions, to such heroic heights of joyfulness, sinks now and faints in face of still more fearful though less obvious trials. More and more clearly, on each occasion that he returns from his explorations, he sees what Goa ought to be, and what in reality she is. And on this occasion, for the first time, we find him weary, disheartened, stupid with grief.

"I do beg of you," he writes to Loyola, "to look on those children of yours in India, and send out some man pre-eminent in virtue and sanctity whose vigour and ardour may arouse my torpor."

And to the King of Portugal and to Rodriguez, he writes, literally clamouring for more workers. But of the king he writes to Rodriguez :

"I am rather afraid that in Heaven God and all His saints will say of him, 'By letters the King shows a friendly interest about the increase of My honour in India'—yet while he apprehends and

punishes those in charge of his temporal profits, if in any way they fail to increase his rents and revenues, he never punishes those who do not comply with his letters and commands about spiritual things . . . it is time, very dear brother Master Simon, to undeceive the king. The hour is nearer than he thinks when God has to call him saying, *Give an account of thy stewardship.*"

Now, more than ever, the pitch of his environment was queered for this noble and innocent man because he simply could not grasp the fact that Christianity did not mean for those round about him who called themselves Christians, what it meant for him. For, after all, if we are asked to define a Christian, one of the briefest and most adequate definitions is just this: a Christian is a missionary. One of the least satisfactory ways of regarding the Christian life is to say that the Christian is one who has been rescued by Christ from the terrors of hell, and kept by His power for the glory of heaven. What Christ came to do, Francis felt, was *to save men from their sins.* That is what the opening chapter of the New Testament had told him. And to save a man from his sin is just another way of saying "to save him from his selfishness." When Christ changes a man it means that the principle of his life has been changed from that of self-regard to that of regard for others. The old motive, self, has been replaced by the new motive, love. And love is not sentiment but sacrifice. These were the facts on which Francis based the whole conduct of his life. It was clear and simple to him. Christ had given Himself to Francis, and in so doing He gave Francis to all the world.

For the impulse to the Christian life, that is, the missionary life, begins in gratitude. It is a sense of infinite debt to One who gave Himself for us. But He loved us because He loved all the world. And we do not perfectly love Him unless we love that which He loved. Our sense of infinite debt to Him must express itself, for there is absolutely no other outlet, in a sense of debt to the world. And so, for Francis, the Christian life was summed up in two words, words that he did not merely write down in a letter or in a book, but which he wove into a living epistle, his own daily life—and these words were consecration and sacrifice. God in Christ had sacrificed Himself in love for Francis. Christ had bought him, and the price He had paid was the Cross. And his only answer to that, as a gallant gentleman, was to consecrate himself to Christ. And the only way in which he could fulfil this self-consecration was in sacrifice.

But not only did Francis love this world which Jesus had loved, but he loved it, as Jesus loved it, passionately. And of how few Christian lives—comparatively speaking—could we write this as an epitaph, "He was a Christian, for he passionately loved the souls of men"? It was true of the Apostle Paul, and of this one and that one, here and there, thinly down the pages of history, it has been true. It was true of Francis Xavier. It was the Cross of Christ that thrust him out into those unknown harvest fields. All this we have to understand at this point in his history, in order that we may understand the agony he now suffers when it begins at last to come home to him that as a Christian he stands almost alone in the midst of this great

invading power that comes to India from Europe in the Name of Christ, bearing His Cross as an ensign, and in the same hour dishonouring His Name unspeakably. We see him standing on the edge of the unknown, the call of the Divine Compassion rising louder and louder in his heart and conscience, and we can set alongside of his experience the experience of St Augustine as he stood in a land that was highly civilized and had known the loftiest morality in the world: "I found there nothing of the blotting-out of the handwriting against us, nothing of the sacrifice of God which is a broken heart, nothing of the earnest of the Spirit—of the heavenly city which is the Lamb's wife, nothing of the cup of our salvation. No one sings there, 'My soul wait thou only upon God, for from Him cometh thy salvation.' No one hears there the voice that cries, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'" If we read those words of St Augustine and then try to put ourselves in the place of Francis Xavier, standing under the Passion of the Cross and looking out across a land wrapped in utter darkness, knowing neither true civilization nor true morality, although its invaders professed them both, we may begin dimly to understand the pity that brought Christ to the Cross for us men and for our salvation.

Here then, in Goa, disillusioned at last about the religion of his own race and the civilization of the West, Francis found his Gethsemane, his Calvary, an anguish as of hell. All the sensitiveness of this tender soul writhed beneath the stab of it. The hypocrisy, the indifference, the cruelty, the lust of temporal wealth and power, that paraded itself under the banner of the Cross, almost bore him to the earth.

"It is almost a kind of martyrdom," he writes to John of Portugal, "to look with patience on the destruction of what one has gained with so much labour." And again, "At last experience has taught me that your Highness is not powerful in India for the increase of the faith of Christ, and is powerful for carrying off and keeping all the temporal riches of India." And finally, "Be prepared, for kingdoms perish and dominions have an end. It will be something new to you, at the hour of your death, to find yourself dispossessed of your own kingdoms; something that never happened before will happen then, when you find your own dominions gone; something new it will be then to find yourself in the Kingdom of Another, and to receive—nay, God forbid it—your sentence of expulsion from Paradise."

Terrible words, and yet the tender breaking heart could not leave out that "God forbid it" at the end.

Towards the end of January 1549 he revisited his mission stations in the south. In the country of the Great King, where he had baptized whole populations three years earlier, he found things going badly. Enriquez, the missionary in charge, had given up in despair. The Great King had not maintained his former goodwill toward the Christians. Probably he found that his patronage of the western religion had not brought him all the advantages which he had hoped for. Enriquez's versions of the persecutions were highly coloured and pitiful, but we suspect that was partly due to his desire to have a good excuse to quit an uncongenial field. In any case he was promptly sent back to the work he had deserted.

Francis then proceeded to the Fishery Coast, and gathered the workers together at Manapar for a conference. During those fifteen days he talked with each of the workers alone. One of them wrote later, "He asked us all about those things which were in our minds, and talked of everything which might help to keep together and increase our converts." He left them with some written instructions for their future guidance. These written instructions begin by bidding the missionaries baptize infants whenever possible. After baptism, nothing, he goes on, is more important than the instruction of the children. Each village is to have a teacher of its own. The women are to meet on Saturdays, the men on Sundays, and the great truths are to be preached in simple language. The missionaries are to make a point of reconciling enemies. A copy of the Articles of the Faith in the Manapar dialect is to be given to each village.

The people are to be instructed to tell the missionaries when anyone is ill, that he may be visited, taught, and have the Gospel read to him. At funerals the priests are to address those who are present, reminding them that they too have to die, and that if they wish to go to Paradise they must live a good life.

The missionaries are not to get mixed up in law cases if they can avoid it. They are to keep on good terms with the Captain, and live in peace and friendship with all the Portuguese, and return them good for evil, and only speak with them about the things of God.

They are to help the native priests in every way, and never to write down an ill report of any. Punish-

ment is only to be given to them with the sanction of the senior missionary. They are to be very slow, says this great lover of children, in punishing the little ones, even when they appear to deserve it, to beware of offending them and to "show them much love." His instructions end thus :

"Again I charge you earnestly to strive to make yourselves loved wherever you go or are, doing kind deeds to all, and always leaving loving words behind you if possible, for thus you will bring forth much fruit in their souls. The Lord grant this and be with you all."

In these words we find the response of Christian faith to what appeared to Francis a few weeks earlier to be a quite desperate situation. The torpor, the despair, the prophetic wrath, all have gone, and in their place has come this quiet authoritative confidence. "Show them much love. Do kind deeds to all, and always, if you can, leave loving words behind you. Return good for evil. Speak only of the things of God. Teach the children. Visit the sick. Bury the dead."

Up and down the continent still he went, from Cochin to Goa, from Goa to Ceylon, from Ceylon once more to the north, visiting, pacifying, reorganizing and always preaching "the Law of God our Lord." One of his most difficult tasks was the ordering of the students' training college at Goa. Perhaps it was too much to hope that an institution established on such a foundation should flourish. The beautiful building had been paid for and richly endowed by the revenues which the Portuguese Government had stolen by force from the Hindu temples in the

neighbourhood. That had not disturbed Xavier in the least: it is doubtful if it would have disturbed any Christian conscience of that time. In every age there are blind spots upon the eye of conscience, but the spots vary from age to age.

The College of St Paul in Goa must have been a curious institution. "Twelve or thirteen different languages were spoken there"; says Brou, "besides Indians from every province, there were Africans, Malays, Chinese, men from the Moluccas, Bonzes from Pegu and Siam, and several young Ethiopians . . . among the catechumens were Cingalese refugees, the ambassador of the King of Kandy, and three Japanese recently arrived from Malacca." Glowing accounts, obviously decorated by the desire to please, were sent to Europe by the Father of the College at this time. Other reports, less glowing, are no doubt more correct. Most of the boys came to the place too old to have their morals satisfactorily dealt with. Yet this seemed at the time a necessary evil, for if they came too young they forgot their native dialect, and were unable to preach to their own people when the time came for them to return. The house was badly governed, and Xavier wrote to Europe begging them to send out a more capable head. There was also a great deal of friction among the priests and instructors, and he spent most of the months just preceding his departure for Japan in trying to get things into better order.

At the beginning of September 1548 two new workers arrived from Portugal. Before their ships had cast anchor in the harbour, Francis, eager as always for tidings from home, had sent out messengers with refreshments and requests that they might land

as soon as possible for he longed to see them. One of these new missionaries, Gaspar Barzée, has left us a vivid description of his first meeting with Xavier:

"The joy which fills our souls is indescribable. I cannot tell you of the goodness of Father Francis. At first it was for the Fathers and Brothers, like a whirlwind of love."

Gasper was a humble soul and had a sense of humour. He wrote to his friends an account of how he preached before the Saint:

"Soon Father Francis told me to be ready to preach at St Paul's on the Day of Our Lady in September, and he warned me well to speak distinctly, because by what the people in our ship had said, there would be a great crowd. But I spoke so low that they were very displeased, Father Francis among the others. Several of them had hardly heard me. Then he [Francis] went away, leaving me orders to practise speaking during the night in the church. I did this till all the brothers were satisfied with me. Since then I have been preaching, and the people are quite pleased."

The other new arrival at this time, Melchior Gonçalez, has left us an account of his first impressions of the Saint:

"He is not old, and his health seems good, although he is ascetic in appearance. I note that he does not drink any kind of wine. Privations are nothing to him, for he is a brave soldier of Jesus Christ, forgetting himself, and thinking of nothing but his King. One can apply to him the words of

St Bernard: 'The faithful soldier does not feel his wounds, when he looks with love on those of his King.'"

A number of the other passengers who arrived by their ships asked Xavier to allow them to enter the Company. These men included the captain of one of the ships, the governor of one of the forts, several noblemen, a secretary, and a doctor. Xavier gave them all the Exercises, and as a result of his observations retained only one, Luis Mendez. This man died a martyr's death in South India a few years later.

Bad news came in September from Comorin of renewed invasions, and Xavier set out at once for the south. He was given a royal welcome by his beloved converts on the Fishery Coast. As he disembarked they sang the hymns he had taught them, and carried him on their shoulders to the church. In spite of, or perhaps rather strengthened by, persecution and hardship, the Paravas were increasing in numbers and in faith. The mission here was better manned, better ordered and disciplined than any of the other missions in India. Grammars and dictionaries had been written, and the work of teaching and translating methodically carried out.

Francis Enriquez, the runaway missionary, who had been so sternly sent back to his work by Xavier, was making good. The letters from Xavier are all planned to cheer him and encourage him, and restore his self-respect.

"Do not be discouraged," he writes, "when you are not gaining as much fruit as you wish . . . the Enemy of human nature has you in great abhorrence

and would like to see you out of there, so that no one may go to Paradise from Travancore. It is customary with the devil to hold out to Jesus Christ's servants the vision of great services elsewhere, and he does this with evil intentions, so as to disquiet and to molest a soul who is somewhere doing service to God where he is. I fear the enemy is combating you just here, and is giving you many troubles and vexations in order to boot you out."

Three and a half years later Enriquez had established nineteen new churches in Travancore.

January and February of 1549 were spent by Xavier in Cochin. Besides his usual tasks he was occupied in founding a college or seminary there. A very revealing letter to Loyola gives some account of the chief difficulties his representatives were faced with.

"The great heat in summer, the winds and rains in winter, make life in these lands very troublesome. There is little to maintain the body either in the Moluccas, Socotra or Cape Comorin. The spiritual and bodily toil is marvellously great when one has to deal with such people. Their languages are hard to get hold of. . . . All the Indians whom we have seen up to now, both Mohammedan and heathen, are very ignorant. Those who have to live among these unbelievers and in the work of converting them need many virtues: obedience, humility, perseverance, patience, neighbourly love and great chastity. For there are many opportunities for sinning. They need, too, sound judgment and strong bodies to carry on the work. I give your Charity this account because of the need there is,

in my opinion, of testing the spirits of those you are going to send to this country."

The desire to push on to Japan now begins more and more clearly to emerge. Francis has come to the conclusion that only so long as the Indians have Europeans with them will they maintain the Christian faith. And the supply of men from Europe is terribly inadequate. But from what he has already gathered concerning the superior culture of the Japanese, he believes that "they themselves might perpetuate the fruit which we of the Company might gain in one lifetime." Of course Xavier's knowledge of India, as we must remember, was only of the lower castes. Beyond these he never penetrated.

"I have great hope," he writes to Loyola, "that many will become Christians in Japan. I am determined to go first to the King's court and afterwards to the universities. I will write fully of everything. I will not fail to write to the university of Paris and through it all the other universities of Europe will get word."

Again he writes:

"I would not give up going to Japan though it were certain I should be in greater danger than ever, so strongly have I felt within my soul, and so very great hope have I in God our Lord that our holy faith will be greatly increased. . . . The Chinese ports have all risen against the Portuguese. But not for that will I give up going to Japan. For there is no greater rest in this laborious life than to live in great danger of death when it is all undertaken

without any other motive than the love and service of God our Lord, and the increase of our holy faith."

And again:

"God our Lord has command and power over the tempests of the Chinese and Japanese seas, which are the greatest known, and has control over all the sea-robbers. . . . I have no fear but of God lest He chastise me for being remiss in His service, unfit and useless for the advancement of the Name of Jesus Christ."

CHAPTER XI

JAPAN'S FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE CROSS

Only one dread and terror we have, which is fear to offend God our Lord.—FRANCIS XAVIER.

IN April 1549 Xavier left Goa for Malacca and the unknown islands of Japan. On Easter Day they came to Cochin, and there made a short halt. They preached in the town, and were lodged by the Franciscans there. By the end of May they were in Malacca, where they were very joyfully received by their friends. From there Francis wrote a large budget of letters. He speaks of the work which lies before them.

"We are not afraid of meeting the learned of those parts, for what can he know who does not know God nor Jesus Christ? . . . only one dread and terror we have, which is fear to offend God our Lord. . . . All our good or evil is in the good or bad use of His Grace." Again, a very practical resolution: "The Japanese, our brothers and companions who go with us to Japan, tell me that the Japanese padres will be scandalized if they see us eating flesh or fish. So we go determined to be vegetarians."

Evidently Yajiro's friends were Buddhists.

On 15th August 1549 the party arrived at Kagoshima. Francis Xavier's letters from Japan

were the earliest first-hand reports of that country to come to Europe. A Portuguese captain had sent home some descriptions of it in 1547, gleaned from one of his passengers, the same Japanese, Yajiro, who was then on his way to interview Xavier in Malacca. Marco Polo had brought rumours of *Zipango*, as he called it, to Italy, but he himself had not been there. Mendez Pinto, in his *Travels*, claims to have witnessed many of the scenes that Xavier describes, but his claims are unauthenticated. The first Europeans actually to touch Japanese soil were probably some Portuguese sailors who were driven ashore in a storm in 1542. Since then, before the arrival of Xavier, Europeans had called at the ports occasionally, but no one appears to have landed, or at least to have gone beyond the harbours. That adventure was reserved for Francis and his friends.

The little party numbered nine in all. Besides Xavier there were three other Jesuits—Cosmo Torres, Juan Fernandez, and Dominic Diaz. There was also the Japanese Yajiro, or as he was now called, Paul of the Holy Faith, two other Japanese, and two coolies, one a native of Malabar, and one a Chinese.

Of the Portuguese, Dominic Diaz, we know little. Cosmo Torres was a Spanish priest from Valencia. For ten years he had been an adventurer and a wanderer, but the sight of Xavier at work in the Moluccas had rekindled the ardours of his youth, and in Goa, after due probation, he had been admitted to the Society. Juan Fernandez had come out in 1548 from Cordova, where he had been a wealthy silk merchant. He had been "hardened" for missionary work by the bizarre methods at that

time in usage at the College of Coimbra, and his earnestness and sincerity tested in a way thought to be very searching to an elegant young buck: he was bidden to ride upon a donkey with his face towards the tail, dressed in fantastic silks, through the chief streets of Lisbon. Nine months later he was sent to India. Xavier wished to ordain him, but he preferred to remain a lay brother.

Of Yajiro we already know something. He was the first Japanese convert to Christianity.

The voyage was not without adventure. Instead of a compass they had an idol on board, whose mystic advice, assisted by the casting of lots, determined too often the course of their voyage. As Xavier puts it sadly, "Our getting to Japan was at the discretion of the demon and his servants."

Kagoshima, the port at which they landed, was the native town of Paul of the Holy Faith, and his return was the occasion of a great welcome, both to himself and to those whom he brought with him. They were not at all scandalized that he had become a Christian; the fact that he had embraced a new religion only added to the interest aroused by his reappearance. He introduced Xavier to the governor of the town, who received the missionary with much kindness. This kindness was doubtless reinforced by commercial instincts, for the merchants of Japan were just awakening to the fact that it was desirable that the Portuguese ships should visit them, and the different ports were ready to vie with one another in hospitality towards strangers from the West.

As an interpreter Paul was indispensable, and he took great pains to teach his western friends the language. After six weeks the *daimio* of the province

invited them to appear before him, and he received them kindly. Francis expressed his desire to go on to Kioto, the capital, but the *daimio* dissuaded him, telling him that the weather and the wars would make his passage quite impossible until later on. He put a house at the disposal of the missionaries, and Francis occupied his leisure moments in composing, with the help of Paul, a Japanese exposition of the Creed.

The first converts in Kagoshima were the relatives of Paul of the Holy Faith. Another of the earliest converts was one who received the Christian name of Bernard. This man became one of Francis' most faithful helpers, accompanied him in all his journeys through Japan, followed him to India, and after the Saint's death went to Europe, visited the Jesuits in Spain and Italy, and finally died in the college at Coimbra.

But Francis, in Japan, made no attempts to repeat the methods which he had used in Southern India. There, as an old chronicler has said, he had fished with a drag-net, but here he had to fish with a line. The first three months were spent in preparation. Fernandez, evidently a brilliant linguist, Cosmo de Torres, and Francis all became the industrious pupils of Paul of the Holy Faith. Besides studying the language, Francis studied the people with wholehearted gusto.

"They are the best yet discovered," he writes. "In my opinion no people superior to the Japanese will be found among unbelievers. They are of good behaviour, and good generally, and not malicious, marvellously honourable. They esteem honour more

than anything. They are mostly poor, and neither the nobles nor those who are not, esteem poverty a reproach. They are very courteous among themselves. They prize arms greatly and trust much in them. They always carry swords and daggers, all the people, high and low alike, from the age of fourteen years. They will stand no insults nor slighting words . . . they are abstemious in eating, though they drink a good deal. They drink rice wine, as there are no vines in these parts. They never gamble, because in their opinion it is very dishonourable, for gamblers desire what is not their own, and thence may come to be thieves. They swear little, and when they do, it is by the sun. A great part of the people can read and write, which is a great help for learning the prayers and things of God quickly. . . . They are kindly, very conversable, and eager for knowledge. . . . Among the secular I find less sin, and see more obedience to reason, than among those they regard as Fathers—they call them *bonzes*. . . . They [the *bonzes*] are very licentious, and have nuns of the same order living together with them. The populace have a very evil opinion of them. . . .

"If we could speak the language I have no hesitation in saying that many would become Christians. May it please God our Lord that we shall learn it in a short time, for already we begin to have a smattering of it."

Then follows a passage of noble counsel for intending missionaries :

"Be prepared, for likely in less than two years I may write to you that a number of you should come to Japan. So strive after great humility, persecuting

your own selves in the things for which you feel repugnance. Strive with all the power God gives you to know yourselves as you are. Thus you will grow in faith and hope, and confidence and love towards God, and charity with your neighbours. . . . In all your affairs establish yourselves in God, without trusting in your own powers or knowledge, or in human opinion, and so I reckon you will be prepared for all great adversities, whether bodily or spiritual, that may befall you. . . .

"I know a person to whom God did great favour, who occupied himself often, both in peril and out of it, in placing all his hope and confidence in Him, and the advantage that came to him from this would take too long to write. And because all those troubles which you have hitherto had to endure are small compared to those which you will have to put up with when you come to Japan, I pray and beseech you as much as I can by the love and service of God our Lord, to make yourselves ready for much, overthrowing your own affections. . . . And look well to yourselves, my brothers in Jesus Christ, for many are in hell who when they were in this life were the cause and instrument through which others, by their words, were saved and went to glory. . . . I do not tell you those things to make you think the service of God troublesome, and the yoke of the Lord not light and sweet. For if men set themselves to seek God, and use their opportunities, they will find sweetness and comfort enough in His service. . . ."

Again he writes of their difficulties with the language:

"Now we are among them like statues. They

speak and talk a lot, and we, as we don't understand the *lingoa*, are silent. . . . And now we must be like infants, in learning the language. God grant that we may imitate the children, too, in simplicity and pureness of mind.

"I pray you earnestly," he concludes, "that there may be true love among you; and do not bear any bitterness of mind. Convert part of your fervours into love one towards another, and part of your desires to suffer for Christ's sake into suffering one another, and conquering all the aversions which do not allow this love to grow. You know what Christ said, that in this He would know His own, if they loved one another. . . ."

Among the *bonzes* with whom Xavier used to talk in Kagoshima was an old man called Ninjit, the superior of a monastery. One day Xavier, seeing a number of them engaged in meditation, asked Ninjit what was the subject of their thoughts. The old man, smiling, replied: "Some of them are calculating how much they have got out of their parishioners during the last month, others are planning how to dress themselves and feed themselves, others how they are going to amuse themselves. None of them are dreaming about anything important." Another time Francis asked Ninjit which period of life he preferred, and Ninjit answered, "Youth." And then Francis said, "When sailors leave one port for another, which hour is the happier for them, the hour when they are in mid-ocean, or the hour when they are almost in haven?" "All that is not for me," said Ninjit, "for I do not know to what port my ship is going."

Other *bonzes* were less ready to talk with the strangers, especially when they saw that some of the townspeople were becoming Christians. They knew that if all the town were converted their living would be gone. So they began a kind of underhand persecution. They circulated gruesome tales about the missionaries, saying that they lived on human flesh, and to confirm this they strewed blood-stained garments about the place where they lodged. At the same time the *daimio* heard that a Portuguese ship which he had been hoping would visit Kagoshima had passed them by, and he suddenly wearied of his calculated friendship for the "barbarians of the south." He published an edict saying that whoever in the future became a Christian would be killed, but that those who had already been baptized would not be harmed. Xavier thought it time to seek out a more hopeful soil.

"When we saw," he writes, "that we could not in the meantime gain any more fruit we went to another district. We took leave of the Christians, and they took leave of us, with many tears and much sorrow."

This was in September 1550, after a sojourn of thirteen months in Kagoshima. Paul was left in charge of the little Christian community, and for five months he was faithful to them. Then, harassed and persecuted beyond the limits of his patience, he retired from all spiritual conflicts, bought himself a ship, and appears to have spent the rest of his days as a pirate on the Chinese coast. Alas, Yajiro!

Juan Fernandez and Cosmo de Torres went with Xavier. As they left the outskirts of Kagoshima

they came to the fort of Yeicu, where they had already made a number of converts. These they visited and, before they left, taught how to baptize; and gave away some of the literature which they had been so much occupied in composing—some prayers, a Calendar, the Seven Psalms of Penitence, and the story of the Passion, all in the Japanese language. Ten years later a Jesuit brother visited these people. They had not seen a European since Xavier had left them, but they still kept the faith.

By the beginning of October the missionaries found themselves in Hirado. There were Portuguese ships in the harbour. But Xavier had made up his mind to go on to the capital before returning to India, and to "plant there the law of God." "Such an attempt," says Valignano, "needed a truly great and confident spirit. To penetrate a country thus, dressed in so new and strange a manner, and thus attired having to meet all the heathendom of Japan, with no other guide and no other hope but in God, was a proceeding which those who knew what Japan was then would call one of supernatural and heroic faith."

The old chronicler, Frois, had a vivid first-hand account of this journey from Juan Fernandez:

"Neither the cold nor the snow nor the fear of unknown peoples hindered the Father. On the sea the pirates were everywhere, going by land our troubles increased. We carried all our luggage in two wallets. It consisted of a surplice, three or four shirts, and an old blanket which we both used at night. For there are no beds in the Japanese inns. We did very well if they lent us a straw mat or a wooden pillow. Sometimes when we arrived in the

evenings, frozen with cold and famished, there was no kind of shelter for us. At other times, owing to the deep snow, our legs swelled, and we fell in those bitter mountain paths. Poor, badly clad, strangers, and recognized as such, we were very badly received in certain places, jeered at by the children, and even stoned."

Then follows a description of a visit to a monastery of some notoriety. Francis boldly entered and addressed the assembled men :

"The Father at once raised his voice," Fernandez relates, "and speaking very distinctly reproached the superior and the others with great severity for the abominable vice which reigned among them. He also rebuked them for letting the people believe that there is nothing after this life, and again, for deceiving them by exhorting them to make offerings for the dead by which they (the *bonzes*) alone profited. As they listened the *bonzes* were stupefied to think that a man whom they had never seen should reprove them with such energy. Without further formality the Father left them and we continued on our road.

"The five or six days which followed were very rough. Yet all the way the Father added to the troubles of the road a continual voluntary mortification. Even his way of saying prayers on the road had this mark of penitence. Meditation and contemplation were so familiar to him that the surrounding snow-covered mountains and valleys could not distract him ; all the time of prayer Father Francis did not raise his eyes or turn his head ; his arms and his hands were motionless, only his feet moved, and that with difficulty."

There is another contemporary historian, known as the Annalist of Macao, who tells us more about this journey:

"When Francis and his companions arrived at Yamaguchi," he says, "they looked so poor and wretched that no one would give them a lodging. They at once began to preach in the open streets. Crowds gathered and they were rudely treated, but they would take no rebuff and went on preaching. Besides preaching, Francis would read aloud to them from the little book which he had made. Some continued to laugh at him, but others showed interest in what he said."

So they went on, never showing any impatience, but declaring the truth and condemning their sins, till the Japanese, who, the old Annalist says, are experts in judging men, saw that they were irreproachable, and began to venerate them. But this veneration did not come to much. There were very few conversions. So they soon took to the road again, determined to go to Kioto, "the principal city of all Japan."

Neither Francis nor his companions knew the route, and the country was at war and overrun with soldiers. The cold for them was very trying. Often in the inns there was nothing to eat, and they had to fall back upon the little wallet of rice which they had brought for emergencies. Several times they met travellers going towards the capital on horseback, and they used to run after them on foot as long as they could so as not to lose the way. Soon their appearance became so disreputable that the innkeepers would not give them any shelter other than

that of a shed in the garden. In spite of all this, Fernandez tells us that Francis was joyful all the time, and would tramp along with his eyes turned heavenwards and his bare feet among the sharp stones, feeling nothing. Then later on he would see the blood on his feet and say, "Whatever is this? How did this happen?"

They came to Sakay. At first no one would take them in, and the whole town seemed to have turned out to mock them; they tried to preach, but it was hopeless. They went just beyond the town, into a pinewood, and there they made themselves a little cabin of fir-branches. But even there they could not rest, for bands of children came running out to see them, and flung stones at them. "Here one thing alone mars my delight," said Francis, "it is that I cannot preach."

Then the missionaries found a mislaid introduction to a citizen of Sakay: they were hospitably received by him, and given an introduction to a Japanese nobleman who was travelling to Kioto. Without this it would have been impossible for the travellers to enter the capital, as all the surrounding country was in a state of war. The nobleman and his pages were carried in litters and the servants ran behind on foot. With these ran Francis and his companions. "Never," says Fernandez, "have I seen Francis so gay as on this occasion. He wore a Siamese hat. And thus, *à galope*, we covered the eighteen leagues which separate Sakay and Kioto."

Xavier's reception in the capital of Japan must have been one of the most disappointing experiences of his life. In his dreams he had seen Kioto as the Paris of the East, and had thought to discover there

another Sorbonne ready to open its doors to his sweet and reasonable appeal. But it was not to be in the capital that the first foundations of the great Roman Catholic missions in Japan were to be laid. His own account is brief, for he never spent his eloquence over his disappointments :

" On our arrival at Kioto we tried for some days to get speech with the King [the Mikado], so as to ask him for leave to preach in his kingdom the law of God. But we could not get speech with him. When we saw that the land was not peaceful enough to allow us to show forth the law of God there, we returned again to Yamaguchi."

" As the boat sailed down the river," says Fernandez, " the blessed Father could not take his eyes from off the city, but looked towards it, repeating with great emotion, *In exitu Israel de Egypto* . . . and several verses from the same psalm."

The great emotion with which Fernandez says he repeated this psalm was far from a feeling of anger and despair. Even in this bitter moment we hear the same undaunted faith ringing in his voice, and see the same mysterious smile lighting his lips and eyes, that we have heard and seen at every crisis since his conversion. And he goes down the river singing like a troubadour :

" *Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord,*
At the presence of the God of Jacob,
Which turned the rock into a pool of water,
The flint into a fountain of waters ! "

Xavier never returned to Kioto, but in 1577 the first Christian church was built there. It was called

the Church of the Assumption of Our Lady, because on that day, 15th August, the Day of Our Lady in Summer, it used to be called, Xavier had first landed on Japanese soil.

An account of how they came back from Sakay to Hirado has been left us by Fernandez :

"The hardships were greatest on our return journey. It was February, the time of the greatest cold, snow, frost, and wind, and for us there was neither shelter nor succour. The Father used to buy dried fruits at the inns and carry them in his breast or in his sleeves, and then when by the road-side or in the villages he came across little children, he gave them some of the fruits and his blessing."

This little fragment is surely very touching. On the outward journey Francis had constantly been hooted and jeered at by the children. We fancy he had found that harder to bear than anything else —for he was a great lover of children—and so he had thus tenderly provided against the same thing happening on his returning way.

By the end of February 1551 they were once more in Hirado. They had been away four or five months, and had been walking almost all that time, very often with bare feet, and they had brought back no bright tale of success.

Cosmo de Torres was able to give a cheering report of his work in Hirado; the household with whom he lodged were converted, and many of their relatives and friends. But Xavier did not stay there more than a few days. He had come to the conclusion that in Yamaguchi the soil was better prepared to receive the Gospel than in any other part

of Japan. Before he set out on this new journey he procured for himself some richer garments than hitherto, as a missionary, he had worn. He had learned by experience that in Japan people would not listen to his message with much respect if he were poorly and strangely clad. So the Siamese hat and the ragged cotton cassock were laid aside, and he donned instead a very handsome Japanese gown.

The change of dress was significant of a complete change of policy. For in his pocket he put letters from the governor, and from the Bishop of Goa, which he had not hitherto used. These papers offered the King of Portugal's friendship to Japan, and asked protection for the missionaries. Besides these he carried with him several European books, some spectacles, a musical instrument with a range of seventy notes called a *manicordia*, a piece of brocade, a Portuguese dress, an arquebus, three beautiful crystal vases, some mirrors, a richly decorated striking clock, and various other attractive articles.

The *daimio* of Yamaguchi was delighted with the presents, gave the missionaries formal permission to preach, and put an empty monastery at their disposal. A great time followed.

"While we stayed at the monastery," Francis writes, "many came to hear the sermons. Generally there was preaching twice a day. At the end of the sermon there were discussions. Numbers of *bonzes*, nuns, gentlemen, and crowds of other people came . . . they kept up the discussions for many days and then they began to become Christians. Many of them were gentlemen. After having

become Christians they grew more friendly than can be told. After getting correct information about their religions, we began to seek reasons for proving them false. So every day we smashed up some points of their laws. . . .

"When the Christians saw that the *bonzes* could not answer they were greatly delighted. . . . They say that before we came they were always discussing which of their religions was the best. . . . It is a wonderful thing to see, in a city so large as this, people speaking of the Law of God in every street and house."

After the fiasco in Kioto all this is very cheering. Among the converts was an old blind troubadour, who was given the Christian name of Laurence. We read of him in the chronicles of Frois:

"He left his songs, his violin, his stories, and the vain amusements of men, and begged for the favour of being allowed to work, according to his gifts, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, and God, who is pleased to choose the weak things for His great work, chose this man who was blind, and whose face was of a ridiculous appearance, to be the first lay brother of the Company of Jesus in Japan and the first preacher and missionary of the Holy Gospel in the town of Miaco and the seigneuries round about. His words have converted many thousands of souls."

If you had been walking about Yamaguchi in those days, you would have seen a number of fresh bills pasted up here and there in prominent places, all

bearing the same words in the Japanese language and signed by the governor of the town.

"I am pleased to allow that the Law of Deos may be taught and preached throughout my territories and that those who wish to embrace it may do so freely. My vassals are all forbidden under grave penalties to hinder or molest any of the Fathers who preach the Law of Deos."

Xavier worked on in Yamaguchi for six months, and then he summoned Cosmo de Torres from Hirado, and put him and Fernandez in charge of the new community, and set out for the province of Bungo, where he had heard that there was a Portuguese ship ready to sail for India. "I leave you good guardians in Father Torres and Brother Fernandez," he is reported by a Japanese chronicler to have said, "but remember to put all your trust in God alone."

Earlier in his life Francis would have bidden them call upon other names as well; since then, experience had taught him a simpler and a grander faith.

In November 1551 he left Japan. He took with him to India an ambassador from the *daimio* of Bungo, two samurai who had followed him from Yamaguchi, and who were to go to the college at Goa, and two of his Japanese converts.

It was a fortunate thing for the Roman Catholic missions that Xavier left behind him so capable a man as Fernandez. Cary, in his *History of Christianity in Japan*, estimates that he did more for Japan than Xavier did, and in many ways this is true. Xavier, here as elsewhere, opened up a way; he searched out the fruitful soil, and then left others

to plant and to water, while he again prepared to go forward into the unknown.

From Cochin he despatched a letter to Loyola, which is full of references to his work in Japan, and of warnings to those who are to follow him there :

" Those who come out will be much harassed, for they will have to oppose all the Japanese sects, and will have to expose to the world the deceitful way by which the priests get money from the laymen. . . . They will be very bothered with visits and questions at all hours of the day, and even of the night . . . they will not have time for prayer, meditation or contemplation, nor for any spiritual recollection. . . . The Japanese are very importunate, especially with foreigners, of these they make little account, and are always making game of them. . . . Learned men are needed to reply to their questions, especially those who have done well in Arts, and those who were sophists, and who can catch them at once in obvious contradictions.

" I hope this year of '52 to go to China ; our God might be greatly served thereby, both in China and Japan. For when the Japanese learn that the Chinese are adopting the Law of God they will lose faith in their own sects more quickly."

This letter Xavier concludes by signing himself : " The least of your sons, and the farthest away."

At the same time he wrote to the companions in Europe :

" I arrived from Japan with plenty of bodily and no spiritual strength. Nevertheless I hope in the

mercy of God and in the infinite merits of the death and the passion of Our Lord Jesus, that He will give me grace to make this troublesome voyage to China. I am now white-haired. But it seems to me that I was never so strong bodily as now. Work among an intelligent people, who are eager to know in what religion they can find salvation, carries with it a grand contentment. . . .

"Would to God that, as I write here these joyful and happy details, I might actually send to the universities of Europe the pleasures and comforts given to us by the sole mercy of God. I well believe that many and learned persons would fundamentally change their way of life then, and use their great talents for the conversion of the heathen. If they only felt the spiritual delight and comfort which follows such labours, and knew the great opportunity here in Japan, I think that many of the learned men would give up their studies, and many canons and other prelates would leave their dignities and their revenues for another and a richer life. . . ."

He cannot, he says, stop writing about Japan. He fears he is perhaps making a nuisance of himself writing so much, but there is this consolation, that if it annoys anyone all he has to do is to stop reading, and throw the letter away. "With this I finish," then he adds, "Though I can't finish when I am writing to my Fathers and Brothers so dear and beloved, and of friends so dear as the Christians in Japan."

CHAPTER XII

DERELICTION

For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.—*Hebrews* xi.

When Francis had got all his letters written and despatched, he decided that before he left Cochin he would pay a call upon the new Governor of India, Signor Noroñha. He was about to embark upon the most daring of all his enterprises, and the most desperate. He would take whatever help he could secure, from God and from man. The governor was at home in his residence, and received the missionary with every kindness. But was his reverence aware that the only Europeans in China were those who had been made prisoners upon landing there? Oh yes, Francis knew that, but that was just the sort of thing that must be changed. A way had to be opened up for the Gospel, and the King's business required haste. Well, what did the holy Father propose to do about it?

The first visit, Xavier maintained, must be made upon a magnificent scale. An ambassador must be sent from the King of Portugal to the King of China, bearing rich presents. He had already found a gentleman willing to act as ambassador, Diego Pereira, a Portuguese merchant, on one of whose ships he had made the homeward voyage from Japan. This merchant had given Xavier letters of credit

from his agent in Goa for thirty thousand ducats, to expend on presents and on the expenses of the voyage. But even that would not suffice. Would his highness support a further expenditure by a grant from the royal treasuries ? Money spent in opening up so rich a land as China would be well spent. Portugal would profit immensely in the end.

The governor-general was impressed. " I promise you," he said, " the expedition will have every possible assistance, and Diego Pereira will go as ambassador to the King." Francis felt that his visit had been very well worth while. In the harbour below he found a ship just about to sail for Goa.

Meanwhile, in the college at Goa, a certain Brother Teixeira lay in the hospital, to every appearance, dying. All was prepared for his burial, and extreme unction was administered. When was Father Master Francis coming ? Soon, everyone believed, just when, no one knew. " If I am alive when he comes," Brother Teixeira whispered, " I shall recover." Up from the south came a sail, a ship from Cochin, and the holy Father was on board. Soon he was in the college embracing each brother by turn. Would he go to his room ? No, first he must know if anyone was sick, he would visit him at once. And so it was that he found Brother Teixeira alive, and comforted him, and said a gospel, and placed his hands on the sick man's head. " And it pleased the Lord," Teixeira himself wrote later, " that from that time he went on getting better, and is still alive."

At last, Francis retires to his room, bearing in his hands the European mail. One of the letters announces his appointment as Provincial in India.

That means he is given complete authority over all the affairs of the college at Goa, as well as over the missions throughout the East. But that letter is soon set aside. To the letters from Rome he turns, with burning eyes ; to the letters from his " very dear brothers and fathers in Christ," whom, as he used to write, he saw no more face to face but through letters, darkly. We will leave him lost to the world, reading those shadowy sheets with all the rich ardour of a lover, and go back to Brother Teixeira. Perhaps he is not quite strong enough yet to have written his lovely description of Francis, but anyhow the words are beginning to sing through his mind, and we shall have them now :

" The Father Master Francisco," he writes, " was tall rather than small in stature, his face well proportioned, white and ruddy, happy and very attractive, the eyes black, the brow high, the hair and beard black. He wore poor and clean clothes, the gown loose without a cloak nor any other garment, for this was the mode of the dress of the poor priests in India, and when he walked he lifted it up a little with both hands. He went almost always with his eyes placed on the sky, with the sight of which they say he found particular comfort and joy, as if he saw the Fatherland to which he thought to go. And thus he walked with his face so happy and ardent that it caused much happiness to all who saw him. And sometimes it happened that if any of the brothers were sad, the way they took to become happy was to go and look at him. He was very affable with outside people, happy and familiar with those of the house, especially with those whom he knew to be

humble and simple, and with little opinion or thought of themselves. But, on the contrary, he showed himself severe, grave, and at times rough with the proud and those who had a great conceit and opinion of themselves, until they knew and humbled themselves. He was a man of small appetite, although to avoid singularity he ate of all they put before him when he was with others."

One of the new missionaries, who had just arrived, Melchior Nunez, writing home at this time says of Francis :

" Imagine, my brothers, what it is to see, coming and going in this earth, one whose conversation is in heaven. . . . His smiling face is so joyful and peaceful ! He is always smiling ; yet no, he does not smile, it is a spiritual joy that is on his face."

He had need of all this store of energetic peace. One of his first tasks was to dismiss Antonio Gomez, the superior of the college, and appoint Gaspar Barzée, who had done heroic work in Ormuz, in his place. Various novices, too hastily accepted, were also dismissed. Gomez was given another chance. He was sent to Diu, some hundreds of miles away, and instructed to found a new house there. When we gather from various sources that Father Antonio Gomez suffered from a kind of irresponsible originality of administration, a spirit ardent beyond the point of wisdom, and an excess of obstinacy, we admire both the courage and the humour of Francis. We would like to have heard how Father Gomez got on at Diu. Besides reorganizing the college, Francis made a number of changes in the various mission

stations.[1] And though his nomad spirit was straining hard at the leash, he waited in Goa till all should be set in order throughout India. At meal-times in the college the brothers, Frois tells us, gave the Father each in turn the story of his past life. Francis then asked them about the difficulties they had met with and the mistakes they had made, and would talk to them in a way that humbled them to the dust, and then he would begin "to speak and to dwell upon the hope of eternal glory."

Many letters he wrote, as well, to the different mission stations, all full of counsel, some full of rebuke; no, never quite full of these things, ever with a page or so left for nothing but words of tender encouragement and deep affection.

Then came the long farewell. On Maundy Thursday, the day of the institution of the Lord's Supper, Francis and his friends sang together the *Gloria in Excelsis* before the white-decked altar of the college chapel, and there they received the Blessed Sacrament.

From the choir of the chapel the great explorer then spoke with so much grace and power to those whom he was about to leave that Frois says they felt themselves like new men.

[1] The most prosperous of all these missions was in Cape Comorin. Polanco says there were in 1552 sixty thousand Christians in the Cape and thirty churches. We recollect, of course, that South India was then, as it is still, a country of mass conversions, and those who get converted in the mass get unconverted also in the mass. By 1771 there was little trace left of this Christianity. But in 1785 it began again, and in one short tour in 1803 no less than thirteen hundred people were baptized by Gericke. The original success of the Cape Comorin mission was due, after Xavier, to Father Enrico Enriquez, a man of Jewish origin, who brought good brains, as well as a good heart, to his work. He was the first European to make a serious study of the Tamil language, and he composed a Tamil grammar and dictionary.

A few of the brothers accompanied him as far as the harbour. The others waited in the chapel, kneeling before the altar of the Sepulchre to adore the Presence of Jesus, and to pray for those about to put to sea.

The companions chosen by Francis for this final voyage were three—Brother Fereira, a Portuguese; a Chinese youth called Antonio, who had been trained at the college, and Christopher, a Malabar coolie. The appointed ambassador, Diego Pereira, and the rich cargoes that were planned to make plain their paths, awaited the travellers at Malacca. To add to the splendours of the embassage, Xavier carried with him some brocades and tapestries and pictures which Gaspar Barzée had brought from the fabulous bazaars of Ormuz.

The ship reached Malacca at the end of May. There was Diego Pereira awaiting them, but looking unaccountably gloomy. What was wrong? Everything was wrong. Diego had just been informed that he was forbidden to sail for China! "But the captain of the fort, Pedro da Silva, is my very dear friend," protested Francis, bewildered. Yes, but Pedro da Silva was no longer captain of the fort. He had resigned his office, and his brother had just stepped into his place. His brother? A dark flock of long-forgotten troubles swooped up from the horizons of Francis' memory—old recollections of the voyage out from Europe, of difficulties at Mozambique, of a quarrel, mysterious, and not at all of his seeking, which had sprung up between him and Pedro da Silva's brother Alvaro, commander then of one of the ships, and now the new commander here. Some men can treasure a grudge for many

years. Perhaps Alvaro was one of these. Perhaps his behaviour was just the fruit of greed and self-interest; the embassage would perhaps have interfered with his private smuggling affairs. Perhaps he thought he should have been appointed ambassador to China, and not Pereira. "I *will* sail," said Diego Pereira. "I am Captain General of the Sea and I forbid you to sail," cried Alvaro. But Diego had an obstinate look in his eye, and Alvaro thought it safer to make sure. The next time Diego came down the road there was the rudder of his ship hanging up over Alvaro's door, guarded by Alvaro's men. Francis, wandering disconsolately about the harbour, met his friend rushing off to collect his men and recover the rudder at all costs. "You must not," said Francis, "shed blood in such a cause." In place of their swords he drew forth his pen, and wrote a letter to Alvaro, through the episcopal vicar, reminding him that he was exposing himself to excommunication by thus hindering the apostolic mission of the Papal Nuncio. He also reminded the captain that Pereira was the officially appointed ambassador to China, and that no one had a right to interfere with him. "Excommunication," thought Francis, "the very word will bring him to his senses!" But Alvaro was not well brought up. He called Francis a perverter and a hypocrite, and said he did not for a moment believe that he was a Papal Nuncio. And, of course, the Papal brief had been left behind in Goa. It was not the kind of thing that Francis had expected to require. The affair spread over the town, and for days the great adventurer had not the heart to stir beyond his own lodgings, except after dark. Long nights he spent in the Church of Our

Lady, and one early morning some one saw him there saying a Mass for Don Alvaro. But no Masses and no threats of excommunication were to move that mean and obdurate spirit. The rudder remained above the captain's doorway until Diego pledged himself, if Francis went on his ship, to stay behind. The *impostor*, Alvaro said, could make his way alone into China if he chose. So Diego's men, with meek hands and passionate hearts, came and took away the rudder, and fixed it again on the *Santa Croce*, and then left the ship and were replaced by a crew chosen by the Captain of the Sea. Only Thomas Escandel, Diego's factor, and one other of his men, in charge of the cargo which was to be sold at Sanchian, remained on board. Of the rich presents for the Emperor of China, which Francis and Pereira had collected with such joyful faces, we hear no more. It seems as if Francis had decided that without an ambassador and the accompanying ambassadorial state, these presents were hardly in the picture. He began to dream, perhaps, of entering China in a different manner and with a rarer gift, offered up, too, without the gate.

So one day in mid-July, accompanied by Fereira and Antonio and the Malabar coolie, Francis slipped quietly out of his lodgings and down to the harbour's edge. A boat had come in from the *Santa Croce* and was awaiting them. They were about to slip away when the vicar of the town pulled him by the sleeve. "Come," he said, "and salute the Captain of the Sea before you leave!" "I will wait for him at the judgment hall of God," Francis replied as he moved on. And then he paused and lifted up his arms and prayed for his enemy aloud, but sobs choked his

voice and he knelt down in silence. When he rose he took off his shoes and shook the dust from them. That is a thing that Jesus would not have advised His followers to do, had He not believed they could do it in the right spirit. Without another word he embarked.

Francis had planned that this should be a triumphal voyage. It was indeed. But the triumph was not on the surface. "As for me," he writes, "unmoored from any human help, I am going to the islands of Canton."

From Singapore he despatched several letters. One of these was addressed to the rector at Goa, giving him no details of the debacle—these were sent on to him by another hand—but instructing him to inform the bishop that he, Francis Xavier, by the authority delegated to him from the Pope, desired that the Captain of the Sea should be excommunicated. In another letter we find him advising the people at the home base to send out Flemings or Germans to Japan, as they would be better hardened against the cold than men from Southern Europe. So, too late to save himself, he wished to save others.

In August the *Santa Croce* arrived at Sanchian. In those days when foreign ships were not allowed to touch at Chinese ports, this barren islet was used by the Portuguese and Chinese traders as a rendezvous. It lies a little west of Hong-Kong. Even here the Portuguese were not permitted to build themselves stores or houses. Feeling very daring, they would erect small huts of wood or branches where they ate and drank and gambled in the intervals of doing business. But they always burned these places

before they left, to show that they made no claim upon the island. They had good reason to beware of offending the Chinese. There were many horrible tales of how those who had ventured too far were treated. We read of one de Britto, a gentleman, hung about with chains, and a log tied round his chest, who in 1555 was seen by a Portuguese captain and a priest, greatly disfigured and in deep misery. And in 1556 a Dominican monk, visiting the same prison, saw long galleries where by night the tortured prisoners slept, their chains fastened to an iron ring in the ground, and their bodies held immovable with beams and chains.

For two months Francis went from ship to ship, from trader to trader, with his little bag of gold, and his beseeching voice and most disarming manner, asking for a passage to Canton. It was not until October that he found one merchant willing to face the danger and accept the gold. This merchant promised to come on the 19th day of November, in a small boat with no sailors but his sons and his private servants. He was then to take Francis to his own house in Canton, hide him there for three or four days, and from there place him one morning, before daylight, with his books and his little bundle, at the gate of the city. From thence Francis proposed to go at once to the house of the governor, ask to see the King of China (he little dreamed that the King was in remote Peking), and show him the bishop's letter, telling him that the bearer was come from the Pope to explain the Law of God.

How naïve it all sounds! Yet it was this same naïve and boyish courage that he had always gone marching with, across the world that he so loved.

And, like a boy, he enumerates the dangers, as intrepidly as if it were all a game.

"The dangers we run are two," he writes. "The first is that the man who takes us, after having got his two hundred *cruzados*, may leave us on some desert island, or throw us into the sea, that he may not risk being discovered by the governor of Canton. The second danger is that if we are taken to Canton, and get before the governor, he will order us to be tortured or make us prisoners. Besides these two dangers there are many others, and greater, which do not concern the Chinese."

And now the adventurous child remembers the best part of all the adventure. The first in the second and chief list of dangers is:

"Loss of hope and trust in the mercy of God. By His love and for His service we go. . . . We also confirm ourselves, too, with the saying of the Lord, 'Who loves his life in this world will lose it, and he who loses his life for God's sake will gain it.' Which agrees also with what Christ our Lord said, 'He who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is not fit for the Kingdom of God.' It is safer and surer to pass through the bodily dangers than that we should be convicted before God of spiritual defeats. So, by whatever way, we are determined to go to China."

"Pray much to God for us," he writes again, "for we run the very greatest risks of being made captives. Nevertheless, we comfort ourselves by thinking that it is much better to be a captive just for the love of God than to be free by fleeing the consequences of

the Cross. And if it happens that the man who is to take us changes his mind, because of the great risk he runs . . . in that case I will go to Siam, so as to go from there to Canton in the fleet which the King of Siam sends. Please God we shall get to Canton this year."

From another source we learn that Francis had at this point just got up from a fortnight's fever. His companions, too, had been ill, and Antonio, the Chinese youth who had come as interpreter, had made the embarrassing discovery that during his sojourn in the college at Goa he had forgotten his native language. The little band is thinning down. " I have dismissed Fereira," Xavier writes, " because he is not fit for the Company." There remain only the Malabar coolie, worse than useless, and Antonio, the Chinese boy, who, although he has forgotten his native tongue, is to the end a faithful friend. Long hours he spends, most days, taking down the letters which his master dictates to him, letters of advice and encouragement and instruction to Ormuz, to Bassein, to Coulain, to Cochin, to Malacca, to the Moluccas, to Cape Comorin, to Goa. Theoretically, the mission base is at Goa, in reality it is at the tip of Xavier's pen. At last all the letters are written but one, for the Chinese junk with the merchant and his sons is almost due in a few hours, and there is the packing to be done. Alas, alas, this is not the luggage they had meant to take with them into China! Here is one small parcel of books, and a little bundle of shirts—that is all. Perhaps it was just then, as he tied the string round those little packets, that rage and pity surged up afresh in his bosom, concerning

all the iniquities of the Captain of the Sea. One more letter he would write to Goa, to the rector of the college there, urging him to hasten on Alvaro's excommunication. He had a clear conscience about his reasons for this insistence; they were two, he wrote. In the first place, he wished to bring Alvaro to repentance, and to save him from falling into such sin again, and nothing less than excommunication, he thought, would achieve this. In the second place, he was concerned for the movements of other missionaries, and wished to secure them freedom and safety in the future. We do not blame him even if we fancy that his own sore heart and desperate straits sprinkled a little additional spice of fervour over those last instructions.

"You may be very sure of one thing," he adds, "the devil will be tremendously sorry to see the Company of the Name of Jesus enter China. I give you this certain news from the port of Sanchian. You may be sure of this. For the obstacles which he put in my way, and still puts every day—I could never tell you all of them. But you may be sure of this, too, that with God's help and favour and grace I will confound the devil here. A thing so vile as I am to bring down such a vast reputation as the devil's! What great glory to God!"

Spiritual merriment, but a little forced perhaps. For in the next sentence he is writing these words:

"Remember the counsels I left you on my departure, and those which I have written to you. Do not neglect to keep them, if presently you think, as others have done, that I am dead. For, if God will,

I shall not die. Though it is a long time since I felt so little inclined to live as I do now. . . ."

One of the Portuguese merchants had given them shelter in his cabin. Francis asked the traders to put up a little chapel of wood and straw where he might say Mass and teach the native children so long as he had to wait on the island. At last all the ships except the *Santa Croce* had left the harbour. Francis' host, who had given him shelter in his cabin, was gone with the rest. Often, being hungry, Francis sent Antonio out to the ship to ask them for the love of God to give them a little bread.

The 19th of November, the day appointed for the entry into China, came and went, and the junk which was to have taken them did not appear. Day after day passed, but it never came.

It was then that Francis began to feel ill. The body as well as the heart was sick with uncertainty and with the wounding of his desperate hope. There was no food such as he could relish, and no decent shelter. He and Antonio resolved to go out to the ship. On the evening of the 22nd they rowed out. For Francis a night of great misery followed. He was in a high fever, the ship was cold, and the waves were high. In the morning he said he must go back to land. So the two returned, Francis carrying with him a pair of cloth boots and a few almonds, the gift of some kindly sailor. When they reached the shore he sat down, giddy and cold.

Presently a friendly Portuguese came over the shingle, and seeing him in this plight, rowed him across the bay to his little cabin, and advised the sick man to allow himself to be bled. They bled

him, and he fainted, but when they threw some water on his face he revived.

He could eat nothing. Next day, believing him to have pleurisy, they bled him again, and again he fainted. He was tormented with fever and sickness; but all the time, Antonio says, he was so patient and enduring that not a word escaped his lips.

That evening, Thursday the 24th, he became delirious. His face was then very joyful and beautiful, and he talked aloud in a high voice as if he were preaching.

Towards the end he spoke in a language that Antonio did not understand. It was not Latin, nor Spanish, nor Portuguese, for the lad knew all of these. It often happens that at the hour of death the mind returns to its native haunts, and the last words and recollections are those of the far-off days of childhood. "My language," Xavier had written in 1544, "is Basque." Had the rude walls of that little hut on the desolate beach of Sanchian been transformed, in the eyes of the wanderer, into the tapestried hangings of his old nursery in Xavier, and the rich murmur of the waves hard by re-awakened in his fevered mind the tones of his mother's voice, telling him, ere she bade him a final good-night, some old Basque fairy-tale?

On the 25th, two days before he died, Antonio heard him repeating to himself some of the psalms, and remembered one line:

> "*Tu autem meorum peccatorum et delictorum miserere!*"

These words seem already to fall upon our ears from beyond the veil. They are the first utterances of

the Supreme Encounter. Thus it is that man always speaks when he looks upon God.

On the same day on which he died, the 27th of November 1552, he was buried near the sea. There were present at the last rites two mulattos, a Portuguese passer-by, and Antonio the Chinese. "No one else," says this faithful friend, "dared to venture forth, the cold was so intense."

Well, Francis, did the devil that you wrote about so doggedly, gain the victory after all? Did he keep you out of China at the last? Or "hoping till Hope created, from its own wreck, the thing it contemplated," did you perchance foil him eventually, and crossing darker seas than ever your devil dreamed of, and entering through gates still more dreadful than the gates of Canton, did you find new worlds to conquer and new spheres wherein to proclaim in the phrase you loved, "The Law of Christ our Lord"?

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